

The Illustrated London News Christmas Number



CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Good morning, Mr. Teddy Bear!
I am so glad you've come;
Did Father Christmas put you there?
Or was it Dad and Mum?

They said he'd come the chimney way.
But he is much too fat;
He'd get all over soot—I say!
What do you think of that?

Now let's get dressed, and go downstairs,
And I'll play games with you;
But, if you'd like to see real bears
I'll take you to the "Zoo."

I hope that every girl and boy,
Wherever they may be,
Will have as nice a Christmas toy
As someone's given to me.

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It is a subtle compliment to the good taste of a Lady to send her a complete set of the MORNY Fine Toilet Products, fragrant with

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The Morny chef-d'œuvre, used in seven Royal Courts

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Stoppered bottles, each in carton.

BATH SALTS ... 4/- 10/-
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BATH SALTS TABLETS 4/- 7/6 10/6
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BATH DUSTING POWDER ... 5/-
The foundation of the dainty toilette.

COMPLEXION POWDER ... 5/-
Imparts freshness & delicate bloom.
In patent unspillable
sifter powder box 2/6

SOLID FACE POWDER *Bronze case* 3/6
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CRÈME de JOUR ... 6/6
Greaseless - for day use

TALCUM POWDER tins 1/6 bottles 2/6
both with sprinklers

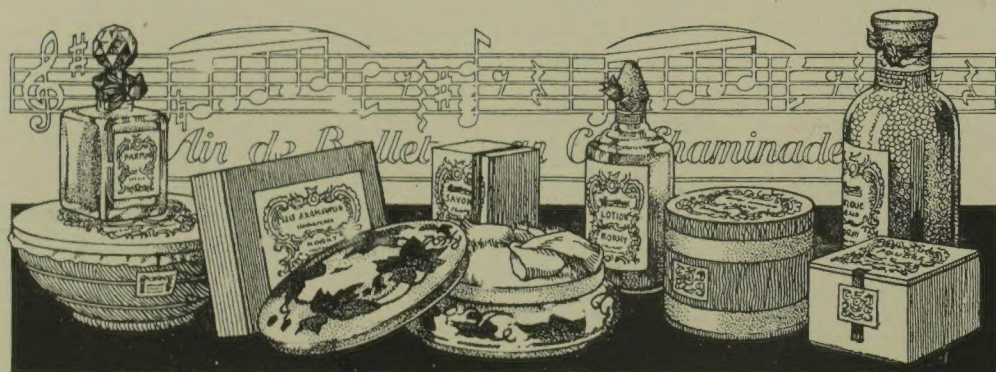
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A fine quality skin soap,
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Mammoth tablets ... each ... 2/3
"Week-end" " " box of 12-7/6
In wood bowls 6" 10/- 8" 15/-

SACHET POWDER *in bottles* 3/6
FORMALISED SHAMPOO PDRS. 2/9 5/-
Boxes containing 6 or 12 envelopes.

The total cost of the set of toilet essentials as above is
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HAIR



As it Penetrates to the Roots it will replace the loss of the Natural Oil in the Hair, the want of which causes Baldness. Ladies and Children should always use it, as it lays the foundation of a Luxuriant Growth. Also prepared in a Golden Colour for Fair Hair. Sold in 3/6, 7/-, 10/6, and 21/- bottles, by Stores, Chemists, Hairdressers, and Rowlands, 112, Guilford Street, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

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To Liquidate a Debt of £9,500 and to Provide for Maintenance.

10,000 Boys have been sent to Royal Navy and Mercantile Marine. 9000 Boys have been trained for Civil Employment, and many Hundreds have been Emigrated to the British Dominions. 1100 Boys and Girls now being maintained. Articles for Sales of Work will always be welcome.

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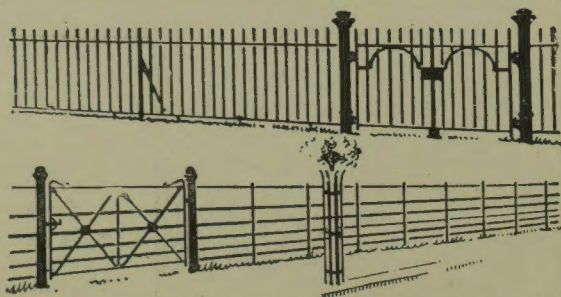
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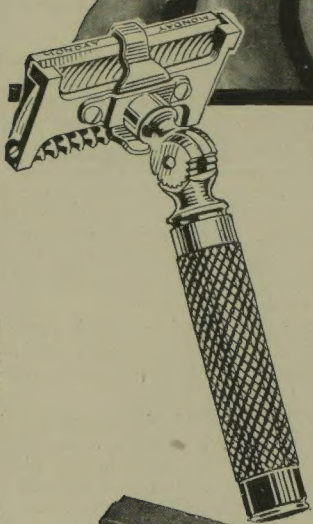
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The Xmas Gift for Men

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Blades, *hand-forged* and *hollow-ground* are powerful and lasting. The *Automatic Strop* keeps them in perfect condition and is simple to use. These features together with the *Roller-Guard*, which feeds the lather on to the cutting edge, have made the Wilkinson first favourite with men.

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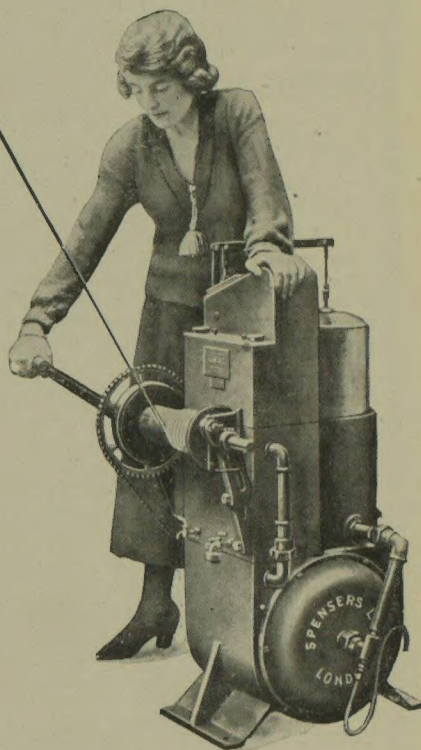
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TOM SMITH'S

By APPOINTMENT
TO
H.M.
THE KING

By APPOINTMENT
TO
H.M.
THE QUEEN

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

CAUTION: SEE TOM SMITH'S NAME ON EVERY BOX.

Here's Good Luck For Your Hair!

A Wonderful Gift to Bring YOU Abundance of Beautiful Hair.

1,000,000 HAIR-BEAUTY FREE TRIAL OUTFITS.

FROM time immemorial superstition has been rife and the most commonly accepted symbol of Good Luck has been the Horse Shoe. However, there is a new symbol of Good Luck nowadays for all, both men and women, who are afflicted with Hair troubles in any shape or form. It is one which implies the restoration of Hair Health and Beauty, and the cultivation of abundant, radiantly beautiful tresses which evoke the admiration of all and the envy of not a few.

The new "Good Luck for Hair" symbol takes the tangible form of Edwards' Harlene for the Hair—a potent liquid which has been proved to be the Elixir of Life for the Hair. No mystic movements are involved beyond those of the World-famous "Harlene-Hair-Drill."

CONTENTS OF HAIR BEAUTY FREE TRIAL OUTFITS.

To-day is the very best time to begin this wonderful "Harlene Hair-Drill." The "Harlene-Hair-Drill" Trial Outfit, which is offered free to all who will remit the cost of postage and packing—viz., fourpence in stamps—contains the following essential requisites for carrying out the "Drill" to the best advantage:

1.—A Free Trial Bottle of "Harlene-for-the-Hair," now universally recognised as the greatest of all hair tonics, and as used by Royalty, the nobility, the aristocracy, social leaders, public people, and millions of men and women in every grade of Society. "Harlene" feeds and nourishes the hair as nothing else does, and so it naturally becomes stronger, healthier, and altogether more beautiful.

IMPORTANT TO THE GREY-HAIRED!

If your hair is Grey, Faded, or quickly losing its colour, you should try at once the wonderful new Liquid compound, "Astol," a remarkable discovery which gives back to grey hair new life and colour in a quick and natural manner.

You can try "Astol" free of charge by enclosing an extra 2d. stamp for the postage and packing of the "Harlene-Hair-Drill" parcel, i.e., 6d. stamps in all—when, in addition to the splendid Four-Fold Gift, described in this announcement, a trial bottle of "Astol" will also be included absolutely free of charge.



FREE TO ALL



Here's "Good Luck" for your Hair! A Four-Fold Hair-Beauty Free Trial Outfit—the forerunner of Hair Health, with radiantly beautiful tresses for ladies and thick, abundant growth for men. Claim your "Good Luck" parcel to-day. See coupon herewith.

2.—A Packet of "Cremex" Shampoo. This is an antiseptic purifier which thoroughly cleanses the hair and scalp of all scurf, etc., and prepares the hair for the "Hair-Drill" treatment.

3.—Free bottle of "Uzon"—an exquisite Brilliantine that gives the hair a glorious lustre and radiance and is especially beneficial in cases where the scalp is inclined to be "dry."

4.—The illustrated "Harlene-Hair-Drill" Manual, which gives the secrets of Hair-Health and Beauty as revealed by the World's Leading Hair Specialist. These secrets will show you how to prevent and overcome all hair troubles and how to cultivate a truly beautiful head of hair.

"HARLENE-HAIR-DRILL" QUICKLY BENEFITS.

Millions of men and women throughout the world now practise "Harlene-Hair-Drill" daily. They have tested and proved that this unique preparation, "Harlene," and its agreeable method of application, "Hair-Drill," is the surest way to overcome Falling Hair, Greasy Scalp, Splitting Hair, Dank or Lifeless Hair, Scurf, Over-Dry Scalp, Thinning Hair, Baldness.

Let "Harlene-Hair-Drill" enrich your hair and increase its value to you. Simply send 4d. in stamps for postage and packing, and a Free "Harlene" Outfit will be sent to your address in any part of the world.

After a Free Trial you will be able to obtain further supplies of "Harlene" at 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d. and 4s. 9d. per bottle. "Uzon" Brilliantine at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per bottle. "Cremex" Shampoo Powders 1s. 6d. per box of seven shampoos (single packets 3d. each), and "Astol" for Grey Hair at 3s. and 5s. per bottle from Chemists and Stores, all over the world.

"HARLENE" FREE GIFT COUPON

Detach and post to—
EDWARDS' HARLENE, LIMITED,
20, 22, 24 & 26, Lamb's Conduit St., London, W.C.1

Dear Sirs,—Please send me your free "Harlene" Four-Fold Hair-Growing Outfit as announced. I enclose 4d. in stamps for postage and packing to my address.

(Illustrated London News Xmas No., 1924.)

NOTE TO READER.

Write your name and address clearly on a plain piece of paper, pin this coupon to it, and post as directed above. (Mark envelope "Sample Dept.")

N.B. If your hair is GREY enclose extra 2d. stamp—6d. in all—and a FREE bottle of "Astol" Hair Colour Restorer will also be sent to you.



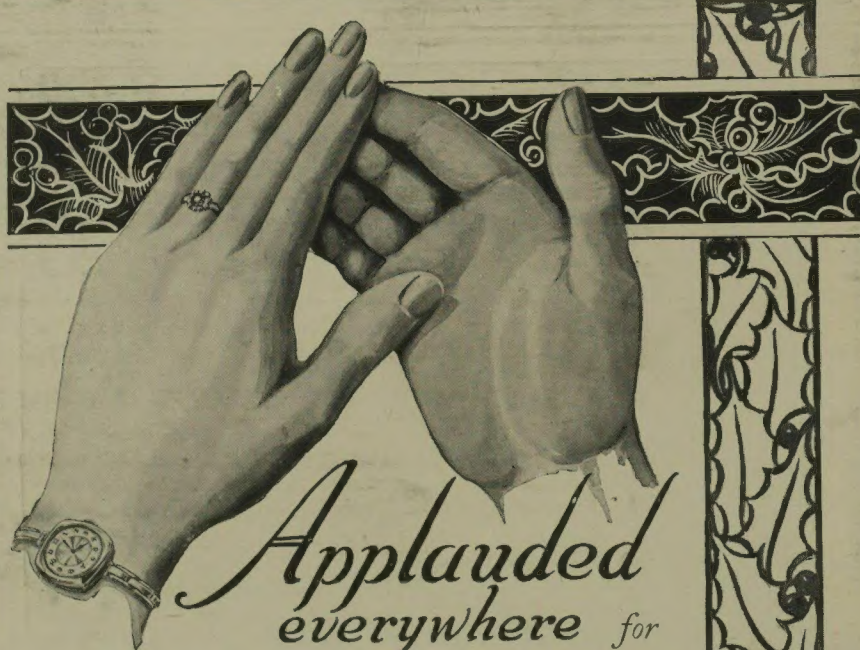
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Intending purchasers are strongly advised to inspect our stock before coming to a final decision. Practically every garment that we offer for sale is worked on the premises by our own highly skilled furriers from carefully selected skins. By handling the skins from the raw state up to the finished article we detect and reject all inferior skins, and at the same time eliminate all intermediate profits and therefore claim with the utmost confidence that the values that we offer are absolutely unbeatable. The shapes illustrated are exclusive designs, and show the latest trend of fashion.



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POST FREE.

DISTINCTIVE FUR COAT (*as sketch*)
worked from very fine selected sealskins, deeply
furred and glove-finished pelts; with collar and
cuffs of Russian ermine;
lined rich black and white
fancy soft satin. Price **125 Gns**

This model can be copied with collar and cuffs of
natural skunk. **98 Gns**

With collar and cuffs of marten dyed fitch, **125 Gns**

With collar and cuffs of shaded pine marten, **175 Gns**

SMART FUR COAT (*as sketch*) worked
from selected bright silky close-curred Persian
lamb skins, on the new straight lines, lined with
black and white georgette
over silk lining. Price **98 Gns**

This model can be copied in Persian lamb with
sable dyed fitch collar **98 Gns**

In golden nutria **89 Gns**

In natural grey squirrel, from .. **98 Gns**

SMART FUR COAT (*as sketch*) worked
from high-grade natural British moleskins, in an
entirely new shape, with collar and cuffs of plat-
inum dyed Russian kitt fox.
A most attractive and becoming
garment. Price **89 Gns**

This model can be copied in beaver dyed coney
and fitch **49 Gns**

In South American lamb and mink **98 Gns**

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SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

COVER DESIGN. A Painting by C. E. TURNER.

The picture on our cover has a true Christmas atmosphere. The scene is a village churchyard under snow, with the congregation coming out of church after evening service. The charming figure in the foreground is a typical young Victorian matron, dressed in the fashion of the time, accompanied by her little daughter and followed by her husband and son.

THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT. A Salon Picture by G. A. BARLANGUE.

The dainty colour-plate on the front page is a reproduction from M. Barlangue's picture exhibited in the Paris Salon under the title, "Le Chapeau Fleuri" (The Hat Trimmed with Flowers).

JAPAN UNDER SNOW: "CHRISTMAS" EFFECTS IN CHERRY BLOSSOM LAND. Paintings by GEORGES DAINTU.

In England we usually associate Japan with sunshine and flowers. These four snow-clad landscapes, reproduced in colour, show that in winter the Land of Cherry Blossom can wear quite a "Christmassy" aspect.

THREE OLD TALES RETOLD: A NEW ARTIST OF FAIRYLAND. Paintings by FELIX DE GRAY.

No one is ever tired of the old fairy tales, such as "The Sleeping Beauty," "Blue Beard," and "Puss in Boots." They are here illustrated, in colour, by a new artist who combines decorative effect with the right spirit of fantasy.

TEN THIRTY, WATERLOO. A Story by HERBERT SHAW. Illustrated by STEVEN SPURRIER, R.O.I.

Mr. Shaw's entertaining story has a delightful blend of gay humour and home-spun sentiment. It concerns the domesticities of a modern young married couple in a London flat, and the principal character is a "charlady" with "a heart of gold."

AILIE AND THE AIRDOO WHEELS. By ERNEST RAYMOND. Illustrated by JOHN CAMPBELL.

The author of "Tell England" and "Wanderlight" has here woven the whimsical fancies of a child about the meanings of uncommon words into a charming story, in which a born idler and ne'er-do-weel for a time finds someone to believe in him.

THE MOTHERLAND. Typical British Landscapes by well-known Artists Reproduced in Colour.

This is a series of twelve exquisite landscapes, by various noted painters, shown at the Royal Society of British Artists' Exhibition. They represent the beauty of the homeland in all its restful charm—its lovely wooded valleys and quiet pastures, its old towns and dreaming rivers, and its shores encircled by "the silver sea." These beautiful pictures will appeal especially to exiles in far lands.

THE LEGENDS OF THE FLOWERS. Four Full-Page Colour Plates from Pictures by ELEANOR F. BRICKDALE.

Nothing more appropriate to a Christmas number could be imagined than Miss Brickdale's imaginative pictures, which blend the beauty of nature with fairy lore and Christian legend, and portray with vivid insight the visions of wondering childhood. The subjects chosen are the rose, the holly, the lavender, and the four-leaved clover.

A CONVALESCENT'S CHRISTMAS. A Salon Painting by JULES ALEXIS MUENIER.

This picture, reproduced in colour, appeared in the Paris Salon with the title "Convalescente." It is an attractive example of the modern French artist's skill in the sympathetic handling of a homely incident.

THE WIDOW'S LOAN. A Story by VICENTE BLASCO IBANEZ. Illustrated by WARWICK REYNOLDS.

In any work by the author of "Blood and Sand" and "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," one looks for a touch of the lurid and the grim. These elements are not lacking in his tale of the hot-blooded and superstitious Argentine gaucho, whose lonely trail across the Andes was fraught with such peril and terror. Mr. Warwick Reynolds has enhanced the power of the story with a set of remarkable drawings which are in his best style.

THE GLORY OF STAINED GLASS. Pictures of two French Cathedral Interiors by PIERRE GASTON RIGAUD, Reproduced in Colour.

Milton's vision of "antique pillars massy-proof, and storied windows richly dight" has never been more exquisitely pictured than in these paintings of Chartres and Bourges Cathedrals. Chartres especially is renowned for the glories of its old stained glass, whose rich colours suggest the flashing of beautiful jewels.

THE INSPIRATION. A Double-Page Reproduction in Colour of a Picture by PHILIP A. DE LASZLO, H.R.B.A., R.S.P.P.

Mr. Philip de Laszlo, the famous portrait-painter, exhibited this fine example of his work at the French Gallery this year under the title of "The Drawing Lesson." The rapt expression of the boy's face as he studies his subject, a statuette, is rendered with masterly skill.

TOWN BIRDS. A Painting by S. S. LONGLEY, A.R.B.A., Reproduced in Colour.

"My Lady of St. James's," as the artist calls his picture, is a delightfully decorative study of a Society beauty, in the ample skirts of bygone days, making friends with a Park swan.

OUR VERY BEST PEOPLE. A Story by EDNA FERBER. Illustrated by J. DEWAR MILLS.

The author of this tale, Miss Edna Ferber, is one of the best-known story-writers in America. The experiences of the Tune twins, left orphans and almost penniless, on the death of their spendthrift father, after being brought up in luxury, provide her with matter for a very interesting study of American girlhood, and contrasting types of character.

A CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME HERO: SINDBAD THE SAILOR. A Painting by E. J. DETMOLD, Reproduced in Colour.

Sindbad the Sailor has been the hero of many a pantomime, and his adventures with that stupendous bird, the Roc, and its gigantic egg, still exercise their fascination. Mr. Detmold's conception is in the true spirit of the "Arabian Nights."

AN ALLEGORY OF THE LOVELIEST OF GEMS. "THE DIAMOND." A Painting by ALEXANDRE RZEWSKI, Reproduced in Colour.

M. Alexandre Rzewuski is well known as a colourist of rare quality, and a master of fantasy in design. This beautiful colour reproduction shows his art at its finest.

A LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNDER THE CROSS. A Colour Reproduction of a Painting by AUGUSTE GORGUET.

Now that the League of Nations is endeavouring to bring the peoples of the earth together, it is interesting to recall a time when Europe was united under the Cross. M. Gorguet's picture appeared in the Paris Salon this year. Its title is "The Crusaders before Damietta" (Crusade of St. Louis, 1248).

JOAN THE MAID. A Decorative Design by KAY NIELSEN. Reproduced in Colour.

Mr. Bernard Shaw's play, "St. Joan," has revived the interest of many in the immortal story of Joan of Arc, "the most notable warrior saint in the Christian calendar." Mr. Kay Nielsen's treatment of the subject is decorative and symbolic.

A FLEDGLING FLIGHT. A Colour Reproduction of a Painting by ADOLF BIRKENRUTH.

This is a picturesque representation of spectators watching a balloon ascent, in the days of coaches and crinolines.

THE OLD, OLD STORY. A Colour Reproduction of a Painting by W. E. WEBSTER.

Carnival time has both its joys and its sorrows, and the happiness of one lover often means grief for another. Such is the theme of Mr. Webster's beautiful and dramatic picture.

JULIET. A Colour Reproduction of a Painting by PERCY F. S. SPENCE.

The most romantic and appealing of Shakespeare's heroines is charmingly portrayed in this picture of Juliet on her balcony. It admirably suits the words of Romeo—"But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."

MOWGLI FOLLOWS THE TREE ROAD. A Colour Illustration to Kipling's "Second Jungle Book," by SUZANNE LAGNEAU.

This delightful drawing, reproduced in colour, was made specially for *The Illustrated London News*. The subject is taken from "The Spring Running," an episode in "The Second Jungle Book," by Rudyard Kipling.

A TOY TRAGEDY. A Painting by Lawson Wood, Reproduced in Colour.

Many a little girl will doubtless drop her new doll this Christmas, with serious damage to its fragile cranium, and will adopt the old remedy of kissing the place to make it well. That is the kind of "toy tragedy" here delineated.

FAILURE. A Story by HOLLOWAY HORN.



CROSSE AND BLACKWELL.

Suppliers to His Majesty.

ESTABLISHED 1706

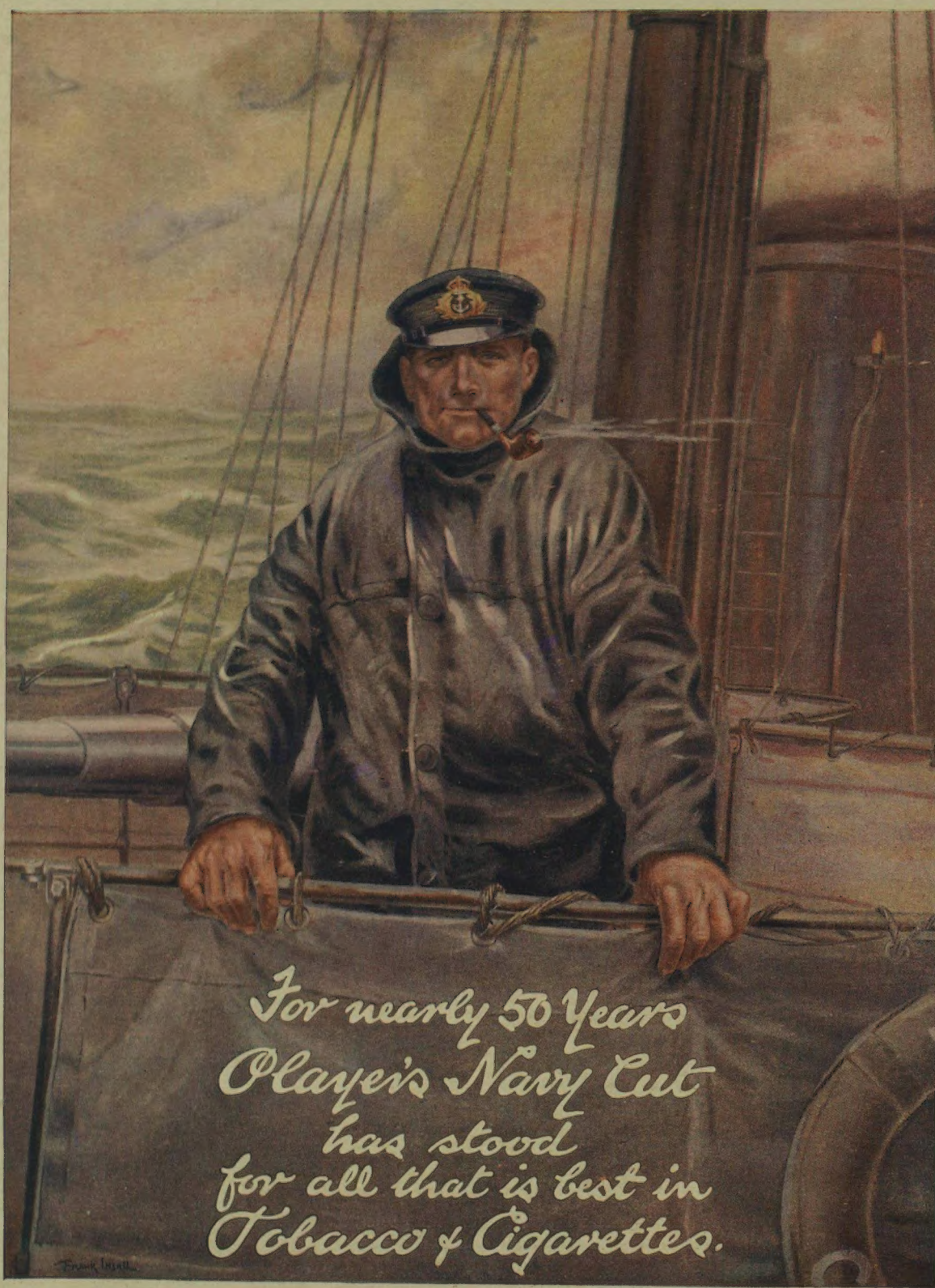
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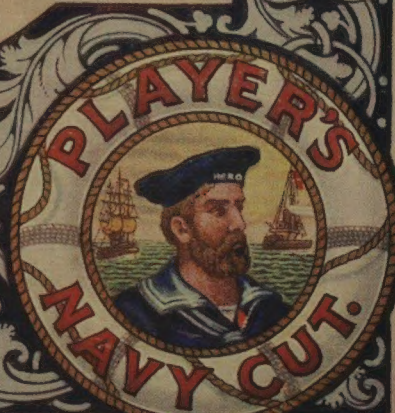
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The Maerland.

From the picture specially painted for *The Illustrated London News* by C. E. Turner.

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

CHRISTMAS NUMBER



THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

FROM THE SALON PICTURE ("LE CHAPEAU FLEURI") BY G. A. BARLANGUE.

Japan Under Snow: "Christmas" Effects in Cherry Blossom Land.

FROM THE PAINTINGS BY GEORGES DANIEU.



A SHINTO TORII IN A LANDSCAPE TYPICAL OF CHRISTMAS. JAPAN IN AN UNFAMILIAR ASPECT.



THE LAND OF CHERRY-BLOSSOM UNDER A MANTLE OF SNOW: WINTER SUNSET OVER THE SEA OF JAPAN.

We are apt to think of Japan, the land of cherry-blossom, as a place of sunshine and flowers and smiling summer; but, as these pictures show, the Japanese landscape may wear quite a Christmas aspect in winter—at least, in certain parts of the country. In its two thousand miles of length there is a great variety of climate,

from semi-arctic conditions in the north to semi-tropical in the extreme south. Tokio itself is sometimes subject to snow; but the country beyond the mountains between it and the Sea of Japan, on the west, exposed to Siberian winds, has a severe winter, and often whole villages are buried under ten feet of snow.

Japan Under Snow: "Christmas" Effects in Cherry Blossom Land.

FROM THE PAINTINGS BY GEORGES DANTU.



A "CHRISTMAS" SETTING FOR A SHINTO SHRINE: A JAPANESE TORII IN A SNOW SCENE.



IN WINTRY ASPECT SUGGESTIVE OF AN ENGLISH CHRISTMAS: A FAMOUS JAPANESE TEMPLE AT KYOTO UNDER SNOW.

A snow-clad landscape, so familiar in connection with an English Christmas, is seldom associated in our minds with the shrines and temples of Japan. These interesting pictures, however, prove that the Japanese winter is often very like our own. A *torii*, it may be explained, is the usual name of a Shinto shrine, but many of them are of Buddhist origin.

These curious structures are very common in Japan, and are somewhat reminiscent of an English lichgate. They are often seen in the vicinity of temples. A Shinto *torii* is generally of unpainted wood, while the Buddhists make them of stone, bronze, hollow iron, or wood painted red. Some of them are said to have been erected as thank-offerings for answered prayers.

Old Tales Retold: A New Artist of Fairyland.



Ardent Lover — Beauty Unaware: The Prince Kneels to the Sleeping Beauty ere Kissing Her to Life.

The tale of the Sleeping Beauty, with which our ears were charmed in nursery days, still holds enchantment and tempts modern artists to illustrate its ancient fable. This latest vision of the Prince's discovery of his Princess pictures him adoring her fair loveliness for a brief moment before his kiss wakes her to life and love.

Old Tales Retold: A New Artist of Fairyland.



The Curiosity which Masters Fear: Fatima Lured by the Query of Bluebeard's Bloodstained Key.

There is an impish, teasing quality in curiosity which makes every daughter of Eve run into danger rather than continue ignorant of something she desires to know; and, since curiosity is the *clou* of the tale of Bluebeard, no wonder our modern artist has set a mischievous simian-character up aloft in his decorative illustration to the tale of Bluebeard and Fatima.

Old Tales Retold: A New Artist of Fairyland.



FELIX
DE
GRAY

Ruffling as the "Talon Rouge": Puss in Boots—Who Won a Fortune for the Marquis de Carabas.

The delicate cynicism of old fairy tales lends them a quality which appeals to grown-ups when they have outlived their love for the mere pageantry of fairy lore; and who can resist the story of "Puss in Boots," the miller's cat who masqueraded as a gallant—a genuine "Talon Rouge," or finished dandy—and won a fortune for the master whom he introduced as the Marquis de Carabas.

TEN-THIRTY, WATERLOO

By

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It would hardly be fair to the author, or to the reader, to tell this tale in brief before it begins, and thus give away the ingenious plot and its unexpected dénouement. But we may throw out one or two hints to whet the reader's appetite. The story contains a valuable object-lesson on telephoning to the police, in the presence of the person against whom their help is required, without arousing suspicion. For the rest, it suffices to say that the characters are an amusing young married couple, living in a London flat, their charwoman and her acquaintance, and two incidental policemen.

The soda trickled unobtrusively down the side of the glass, while he kept an apprehensive eye on the closed bed-room door.

THE breakfast-room of Flat 16, Heathercroft Mansions, Hampstead, was sunnily quiet. The very new and very polished clock mentioned nine with startling emphasis. A door opened, and the empty suit-case which was pitched with sudden violence through it brought up against the nearest wall, opening as it fell. Mr. George Perivale entered the room.

He was in shirt, trousers, and slippers. Between his crooked arms and his chin he bore a heaped assortment of clothes. George Perivale dropped his burdens anywhere on the carpet, stopped whistling, sniffed, and blinked. In spite of this, George was good-looking. Myra Perivale, who had married him six months before, had seen to that.

Myra's voice came from the bed-room.

"George!"

"Darling?"

"I told you it was only eight o'clock!"

"Eight my aunt!" George informed her. "That's nine o'clock just struck. Women never have any sense of time. You'll have to hurry like blazes. Taxi's coming half-past nine. Are you out yet?"

"Dressing," lied Mrs. Perivale.

"Good!" said George. "Get on with it!" He added to himself, "D—n these late nights!"

He stretched out both arms in front of him, and squinted intently at each flat outspread hand in turn. When the left hand fluttered a little he was probably gazing at the right; when the right seemed to be sinking he was judging the behaviour of the left. Therefore, he exclaimed with great satisfaction, "No harm done! No! Steady as a rock!" and took a stealthy, noiseless trail to the sideboard.

The soda trickled unobtrusively down the side of the glass, while he kept an apprehensive eye on the closed bed-room door. His hanging braces got restive and clinked against the furniture. Myra called, "What are you doing, George?"

"Shaving," answered George brightly. "Packing. Dressing. Brushing my teeth. Having my breakfast and doing up my boots. Can I do anything for you?"

"Not at the moment, thanks."

"Do hurry up," entreated George.

"I'm ready," said Myra.

Young Mr. and Mrs. Perivale were going away for the week-end. Haste was imperative. At this moment Mrs. Clara Sparks, the neat and alert little body who performed the household work of Flat 16 with extraordinary good-humour and efficiency, appeared from the kitchen.

"Hullo, Clarice," George greeted her. "It's a treat to see somebody up."

"Clara, Sir," Mrs. Sparks corrected; but his version pleased her. The heroines of Mrs. Sparks's weekly literature were very often labelled Clarice, and she was a confirmed romantic. She patted her dusty hair, and then stroked her broom as she watched her employer arrange the decanter and syphon in a never-been-touched setting. The hand that hung down over the scrupulously clean apron was veined and out of shape, her sallow face with the dull, earnest eyes was like a many-lined page of hard work. "Do you know what the time is, Mr. Perivale?"

"Only one," apologised George absently. "A small one. By Jove, it did me good!"

"Did you enjoy your breakfast, Sir?"

"There was a little too much soda, thank you," George murmured. Then he jumped. Mrs. Sparks, advancing to the table, lifted a dish-cover accusingly.

"You 'aven't touched it!" she exclaimed.

"I'm going to," promised George, and sat down.

Mrs. Sparks put aside her broom and cut him a piece of bread. "Would you like me to pour out your tea?"

"Charming of you, Clarice," George smiled. "And take the Missis in a cup, will you?"

George absorbed breakfast steadily till Mrs. Sparks emerged from the bed-room with Myra's empty cup.

"Jolly good bacon this," he said. "What's the news from the front? She's got her hat on by this time, I suppose?"

"At!" squeaked Mrs. Sparks.

George's worst suspicions were aroused. "Well, how far has she got? Is she out of bed yet?"

"Of course!"

"What was she putting on when you took in her tea? Those stays sort of things or the pale lilac thingummies?"

Mrs. Sparks remained silent. Such audible dissection of chamber secrets seemed to her ungodly.

"Had she got her stockings on?" he demanded.

The little woman looked at him aghast. "'Er 'ose," she conceded reluctantly, "was in place."

"Jolly for her," George commented, and thought miserably of the imminent taxi. Innumerable twopences began to tick in his brain. As a domestic help Mrs. Sparks was admirable; as an intelligence officer she was equal to cold fish on a slab.

"Has Mrs. Perivale come to that silk chimerole sort of arrangement with the wavy little dee-das in violet. Contrasting colour. . . . Don't look at me like that. You're a woman, aren't you? I want to know how far Mrs. Perivale's got with the job. Is she half in or half out? Confound it, I must know how she stands!"

"Love us, Mr. Perivale, 'ow you do carry on! Mrs. Perivale isn't standing at all. She's sitting down."

"Heavens!" groaned George in a toasty voice. "Then she's just made up her mind to think of beginning to do her hair! It's 9.20. I knew it! We're both undone!"

George hammered at the bed-room door.

"Myra!"

"What is it, George?"

"We shall never get there in time. We've got to get to Waterloo for the 10.30 train. It's perfectly hopeless."

He heard the maddening sound of hairpins tinkling deliberately on the silver tray; and, uttered in faint and calm surprise, "Waterloo, darling? Isn't it Paddington?"

"Hear her!" declaimed George, lifting his arms on high. "No, it isn't Paddington. It's Timbuctoo, for all the chance we've got, if you don't hurry up. You said you were ready ages ago!"

"So I am," declared Mrs. Perivale. "I've only got to put on my frock and then pack. Would you like me to go down in the blue serge or the tweed, George dear?"

George dear roared unintelligibly. He appeared to gibber slightly, and his hands went up and down. His eyes were rolling and popping—a creditable imitation of a Bolshevik at bay.

"George!"

A repeat roar.

"The blue serge? All right. Don't get hot and bothered, dear. It's bad for you. If you just see to the cat, I'll be ready as soon as you are. Have you seen to the cat?"

The cat chose that unlucky moment to appear. Singing its morning hope-of-bacon song, it brushed against George's leg. George saw to it with a slippered foot. It sang on with a fresh, snarling motif from the further wall. Somehow this cheered George up. He called blithely that the cat was doing fine, and established an alibi by displaying a saucer of milk and other palliatives to the suspicious little beast.

"All right," he threatened, on his knees. "If you don't want it, starve. I don't care whether we catch the blamed train or not. In another two minutes I shall feel I'd rather go to the office—and I don't get the whole Saturday off once in three months. Clarice!"

"Yes, Mr. Perivale?"

"You'd better telephone the garage and tell that taxi not to come till this afternoon. There's another train at four o'clock."

The suggestion seemed to alarm Mrs. Sparks. She dropped her broom, clasped her hands, and stared at him.

"What's the matter? Do you want to get rid of us?"

"It's the roomatics I get," Mrs. Sparks explained. "Sudden like." She bent stiffly to pick up her broom. "An' you surprise me like. Becos Mrs. Perivale is all for going—set on it, you might say."

Ecstasy descended on Mrs. Sparks and her eyes shone.

"The first week-end you've had since your honeymoon, Mr. Perivale—Mrs. Perivale told me from her own lips. There ain't a day this last week but what she's told me. You're the nicest people I do for in the Mansions, an' we're friends, like—me and your young lady. If such things as you didn't go after all, Mr. Perivale, Mrs. Perivale would be crool disappointed. Crool. You don't know how them things matter to a young woman, Mr. Perivale, them little holidays. When they're set on them, that is, like Mrs. Perivale is. Oh, Sir, you mustn't not think of not going this morning. You know as you mustn't."

George stared at her dazed. Ten words at a time was generally Mrs. Sparks's limit. Then he smiled.

"Perhaps you're right. You're a good sort, Clarice; I don't know what we'd do without you."

"Thank you, Mr. Perivale," Mrs. Sparks bobbed gratefully. "I'll put Mrs. P.'s breakfast back over the stove for a few minutes."

"Clarice!" She turned.

"If you were to learn 'The Wreck of the Hesperus,'" said George, "you'd make your fortune at reciting it. Don't forget. Jam those things on the floor into that suit-case, on the floor, will you?"

George shaved and felt reasonable again.

The taxi was waiting. It was going to be a lark, this week-end. Complete, except coat, with shining effect, young Mrs. Perivale emerged at last. Midway between them, so to speak, their smiles met, joined hands, and danced about. George was a-grunt no longer.

"Good-morning, lightning! You look topping! Feeling like a jolly time?"

"In the pink," said Myra. "All ready for Paddington."

"Waterloo," George corrected, patiently. "With the 'k' soft, as in 'tomato.' Do try and remember. To please me. . . . Sit down and have breakfast."

"When I've packed," said Myra carelessly.

It was then that George took her by the shoulder, licked her pleasantly, and stuck her firmly to a chair.

"You will sit there and have breakfast," he ordered. "The toast's on your right."

"But I've put out everything ready on my bed," pleaded Myra. "I shouldn't take half-a-jiff."

"I was reckoning on it," said George wisely. "Clarice! Mrs. Perivale wants you to pack for her. Yes you do, Myra darling. Don't scream. Get along with it, will you. You'll find all the things laid out on the bed. Take them up tenderly."

Mrs. Sparks obeyed instructions. They could hear her moving about the bed-room. George folded his arms and remarked that that woman was a treasure—was a wonder!

"You're an old idiot," Myra grumbled. "Mrs. Sparks is certainly a dear."

"Not she," said George darkly. He looked painfully at his watch. "The taxi's waiting for us downstairs. I suppose you know that?"

Myra dropped a piece of toast and suddenly screamed, "Mrs. Sparks! Mrs. Sparks! I'm carrying the blue hat!"

"I'll write one of those natty stick-on labels for it," threatened George.

"Strange as it may seem, we are really going," George announced.

"I'm sure you couldn't have better weather nor this lovely morning, Mr. Perivale," said Mrs. Sparks. "An' I'm glad, I'm sure."

"Thank you. Then you'll stick to the ship—the flat, I mean—till we come back? I am leaving you in charge, Clarice."

"Wild horses wouldn't not move me," Mrs. Sparks affirmed, with devotion.

"I hope they won't call, for your sake," said George. "Besides, they'd ruin the carpets. If you want a few shillings for any reason, here's a pound. My God, Myra, what are you doing now?"

With a cry Myra had flung herself on her knees and was clawing at the fastenings of a suit-case.

"I forgot to look if Mrs. Sparks forgot anything."

"Nomum."

"The new nightdress," Myra persisted. "I don't remember whether I put that out."

George lifted her from her knees. "You're not going to open that suit-case again. What's a night-dress matter?"

"It was a pink one," wailed Myra, and Mrs. Sparks sniffed intelligently. "You must remember whether you packed it, Mrs. Sparks? It does matter, George!"

"Steak-colour?" asked Mrs. Sparks. "Was that it, Mum? With bows and instertions? If that was it, that couldn't matter very much, Mum. Whether or no! You'd catch your death and all in that. It's in all right, Mum; a terrible wee driblet of a thing. So I slipped a clean red flannel of my own in the bag as well, Mum, if so be you'll pardon the liberty. The nights is treacherous's you know, Mum."

George coughed.

"Splendid!" he declared warmly, grabbing a suit-case in either hand, and shouldering Myra towards the door. "The very thing! We

shall see you again Monday night, Clarice. Take care of yourself. Forward, Myra! For St. George and week-end England! Waterloo!"

"I wish it were Paddington!" sighed Myra pensively. "It's so much nearer. You know, Mrs. Sparks is a dear old thing, but I don't altogether like leaving her in charge. There's a lot of good stuff in the flat, George dear."

"Clarice," said St. George, scowling at the taxi clock, "is as safe as houses. A heart of gold. And the best bit of stuff isn't in the flat, either. It's here."

He tested the quality of the material with a strong arm.

"Don't, George," murmured Myra askingly.

A strange sound came from George—half laugh, half yelp. He shook.

"Are you ill?" inquired Myra, in alarm. "You know, if you will bolt your food—"

"I'm fairish, thanks," George managed to gasp. "But—bless her, Myra—I'm dying to see you in red flannel!"

Mrs. Sparks, craning skew-ways from a window of the flat to see the taxi drive away, bathed romantically in imagination and hugged herself with dreams. A pale ecstasy was in her eyes.

"S'nice," she whispered. "The dears!"

She retreated, but did not close the window. She went straight to the mirror over the mantelpiece. At times Mrs. Sparks had to raise herself on tip-toe. Mrs. Sparks untied her spotless apron and cast it from her, smiled, and seemed to grow at least a couple of inches. She patted her hair about; looked in the mirror this way and that, and this way again. Thus for long moments did the widow Sparks judge herself, wonder and approve . . . with reservations. Her smile was lasting unconquerably. She looked ten years younger. And she was only forty-two.

"Stannerlee!" breathed the Widow Sparks. "Stannerlee! I wonder what he sees in me!"

Mrs. Sparks turned from the window. Smiling, she half-bounded at the discarded apron, kicked it a few paces, skittled to it, picked it up, hid it in a drawer scornfully. She found her black hat, and sneered at it.

"I'm fair sick of the sight of yer," she told the hat, before she hid it away with the apron. Then she busied herself in the kitchen of the flat, whence there shortly came dish-sounds, a mirthful humming, and nice smells. The cat watched the widow Sparks with a meditative appreciation, and considered Mrs. Sparks a far superior being to George. There came an odd and cautious whistle from the world outside.

"Stannerlee!" exclaimed Mrs. Sparks, and hurried to the door. She opened it in the manner of a conspirator, and waited expectant, smiling. A loutish young man, wearing boots with rubber soles, came shufflingly and without noise up the stairs. He raised shifty eyes to hers. Mrs. Sparks answered his mumbled question, beaming.

"It's orright, Stannerlee. They've gone. Come in!"

"They're gone orright," Mrs. Sparks repeated. "Whatcha looking all round yer for? Have a go at them kidneys. Take yer cap off and make yourself feel 'tome like. I did them kidneys special."



The hand that hung down over the scrupulously clean apron was veined and out of shape; her sallow face with the dull, earnest eyes was like a many-lined page of hard work.



She put the receiver to her ear. Exchange called. But Mrs. Sparks glued her hand tightly over the mouthpiece, and conversed with Stannerlee.

"They'll do, ta," Stannerlee conceded grudgingly. It was his habit to speak in grumbles. The feast Mrs. Sparks had prepared in his honour and laid in the breakfast-room was agreeably incidental, but it remained only incidental, to his settled grievances against life. Stannerlee took what came. Kidneys—or his chance meeting at the pictures with Mrs. Sparks a fortnight before. Anything you got for nothing showed a profit, didn't it? That was Stannerlee's creed. Everybody was trying hard to bite you, and if you had a chance you got in your bite first, see! "You couldn't notice the flies on Stannerlee" was Stannerlee's notion of himself.

He finished his second kidney and began his second bottle of stout.

"Ain't you having anything, then?"

"No, thanks." Her eyes were fixed on him. "Got a job yet, Stannerlee?"

He shook his head.

"An' not likely, neither," he grumbled. "You can tramp your blamed feet off. It's the war's done it. They don't wantcha. But you wait till Labour comes in the next time!"

"The luck'll turn," Mrs. Sparks consoled. "Talways does." She hesitated before she put a hand, rather timidly, on his shoulder. "You're a nice young feller, Stannerlee—I knew you was the first time I met yer. Lovely picture they was showing, wasn't it? You'll get a job all right, don't you fear! What say?"

Stannerlee moved uncomfortably. "It's gottacome quick, then. I ain't got a bob on me!"

"I believes in yer," affirmed his hostess.

"Aar," said Stannerlee indifferently.

"I do an' all!" emphasised Mrs. Sparks. "You've got it in yer, Stannerlee." She tapped her forehead. "You're one of them slow-seemin' ones, but you've got it there! An' I wouldn't like yer to have to go short. I've done it meself, but it's worse for a man. It makes him feel like nothing. Naked, you might say. Take hold of this till times get better, Stannerlee. You can brass up when you're in a job again! When it suits yer!"

From somewhere romantic Mrs. Sparks of the kind heart had produced the pound note George Perivale had given her before departing. It vanished to somewhere, the very second Stannerlee took command of it, with the uncanny swiftness of a conjuring trick.

Stannerlee stared at her with his small, dull eyes.

"Blimy!" He recalled her name with an effort of memory. "You're a rum 'un, Clarer! 'F'you go chucking pound notes about like that you'll die in the gutter! Where was you brought up? On a farm?"

Mrs. Sparks was puzzled.

"I likes 'elping people, if that's what you mean," she said. "The master calls me Clarice—did I tell yer? It's only his joke, of course," she added with longing.

"E would," Stannerlee commented, stirred for the first time to uncouth mirth. "Any man would—I don't think. You kin tell him from me he's got a good butcher. These kidneys you pinched off of him are all right! What's up with yer?"

"Wadcha mean—pinched?" she demanded sharply. "You're down the wrong street, Stannerlee. I bought this feed you're having wimme own money, an' don't you forget it. My guv'nor's the best in the

Mansions, and so 's 'is pretty missus. I wouldn't rob 'em of a plate of dripping, not on me oath I wouldn't!"

"Keep cool," said Stannerlee, grinning. "You and me are pals, ain't we... Clarer? No offence, I'm sure! A joke's a joke. Wadcha messin' about for?"

"Granted." The little woman subsided. Stannerlee moved his mouth, and she was up again, eagerly hospitable. Stannerlee would like another o' them kidneys? Stannerlee wasn't saying that he couldn't do with one. Mrs. Sparks went alertly to the kitchen.

Stannerlee slowly followed. Busy Mrs. Sparks smiled happily when she looked up. "Take yer long, Clarer?"

"Ten minutes." She added with pride, "To do proper."

"Aar," said Stannerlee, and went back into the breakfast-room. His sagging shoulders, his small eyes, had alertly changed. Like a hungry cat, an Ishmael cat, he moved across to the bed-room door, appraised a locked trinket-box on the dressing-table, the silver brushes. Opened the window entirely without sound, and stretched far out, reconnoitring a line of retreat. He came back, swiftly back, appeared to slide along the carpet as before wind. There he halted. His chin cupped in a hand, his head sunken forward a little, the guest of the Widow Sparks surveyed the silver on the sideboard.

Good silver, chiefly wedding presents—an array that was the Perivales' pride.

"Aar," remarked Stannerlee, straightening. "It's a gift—a bloomin' gift!"

He slouched into the tiny corridor to make certain that the door of the kitchen was shut. When he returned, Stannerlee unbuttoned his coat and brought forth a neatly folded bag of green baize. Into its yawning mouth Stannerlee popped, selecting them professionally, articles of silver. It was a one-two-three job. Five minutes was ample, and he had five minutes before Mrs. Sparks, contentedly grilling, would appear with her offering of kidneys. There was no danger there.

But she appeared then, although Stannerlee, engrossed and confident, was unaware of it. Mrs. Sparks had slipped across from the kitchen to ask Stannerlee whatever made him think she had been brought up on a farm. She had been born and bred in Hoxton.

This item of interest remained untold. The little woman stood on the threshold with the stillness of stone. Life faded from her eyes and from her lips. For a second her intelligence, her spirit were supine. Then she rallied. She swung about, and regained the kitchen without a tell-tale sound. Her soul had gone down in battle, but not her courage. Her red hands shut tightly. It was up to her.

"Oh, my Gor!" she whispered, and went straightway into action. She dropped a plate, gave a cry of annoyance, banged the pan on top of the grill. She called loudly that she was nearly ready. Stannerlee whipped the bag, only half full, out of sight under a chair. When Mrs. Sparks, having noisily advertised her coming, appeared in the doorway, he was seated, contemplative, at the table.

"Y'ain't been long."

"They're done orright." Mrs. Sparks put the hot plate down. She did not willingly look at him—Stannerlee, whom she had judged such a nice young feller; Stannerlee, whom she knew now to be a thief. She was thinking. And Stannerlee was thinking, too. The interruption was



Mrs. Sparks came at him again, determined and uncaring. Stannerlee hit her once, hard, and she went down.

annoying, but it didn't matter. She was only a loopy old woman, and she wouldn't notice anything wrong.

"If she *does* notice, she's for it," Stannerlee decided amiably. He had all the morning—all day, if he liked. At the moment there was another kidney.

"A drop more stout, Stannerlee?" She held up the bottle and found it light.

Stannerlee grunted. "There ain't no more stout. I've done it in."

"I thought as two bottles would do yer," she said regretfully. "I'm sorry, Stannerlee."

"Y'ain't sorrier than me," he grumbled, and then inspiration stabled the widow Sparks with an idea so cold and practical that she almost gasped out. "I c'n easy get some more," she told him brightly. "They ain't only round the corner. The boy'll pop across with it in a jiff."

"Going out?" asked Stannerlee hopefully.

She shook her head. "We alwis telephones."

"Aar," said Stannerlee indifferently. "When it comes round, you'd

better 'ave some," he planned, with cunning. "We'll make a day of it. Y'want a drop of stout to set y'up, if y'ask me!"

"I will," promised Mrs. Sparks, and slid from his sight. The telephone was on a little table, behind a screen placed cornerwise across an angle of the room. She could hear her guest eating busily as she swiftly rehearsed, in her mind, the exact manner of her message.

She put the receiver to her ear. Exchange called. But Mrs. Sparks glued her hand tightly over the mouthpiece, and conversed with Stannerlee.

"You won't have to wait mor'n three minutes, Stannerlee. Hampstead 420Y, please! It's just the other side of the"—now Mrs. Sparks pulled her hand away from the mouthpiece—"Police station"; and "Police station" was all the Exchange heard. Again Mrs. Sparks covered up the mouthpiece.

While she feverishly waited for the connection she rattled on for Stannerlee's benefit alone. "Can't you get 'em—it's Tomsett's, the grocer's—'n I told you the number 420Y, didn't I? Orright, I've got 'em, saucy! Tomsett's? Half-a-dozen Whitbreads. Not shortbreads—no—Whitbreads."

Mrs. Sparks cackled at the jest. At last police-station was curtly challenging. She pulled her hand from the mouthpiece a second time.

"Sixteen Heathercroft Mansions—Perivale's—send at once, please! At once!"

Stannerlee heard the receiver bump back into place. "It'll be along in a minute," said Mrs. Sparks, flushed and amiably smiling. "I'll tidy up out there. There's some empties he c'n take back, too."

Stannerlee felt a draught. And he had been careful to shut tightly the door into the bedroom. When Mrs. Sparks re-entered two minutes later, he was wary with the fifth sense of his sneak-thief trade. There was something different.

He stared at her. He pulled in his long legs, got up, moved and sniffed about.

"Wadcha open the front door for?"

"Me?"—she pretended surprise. It was fatal.

"Yus, you! Who else is there?"

"Ain't the grocer's boy comin'?" she retorted quickly. But though she said it quickly, her voice faltered, and her look, and she had said it too late. And the cold ferocity that had suddenly changed his face caused fear and guilt to show on hers. He saw her eyes, wavering, mark the green bag. She knew. Stannerlee sprang up, and was on her.

"You've shopped me, you devil. That's what you've done!"

"You're shopped orright, you thief," she told him, glaring defiantly as he held her. "You're shopped, you dirty dog. I dunno 'ow you could do it, Stannerlee. I thought you come 'ere to see me."

"That's a good 'un," snarled Stannerlee. "Ter see you, y' old hag!" He moved with violence towards the bed-room door, and his way of escape; he was surprised to find her still clinging to him. "Let me go! 'J'ear!"

Mrs. Sparks heard, but she still hung on. Stannerlee could hear steps on the outside stairs already. He called her more than a devil in the second before he wrenched free from her. Mrs. Sparks came at him again, determined and uncaring. Stannerlee hit her once, hard, and she went down. She did not even hear his banging of the bed-room door behind him. In her falling she touched a leg of the table, and one of the empty bottles of stout crashed down and rolled grotesquely along the carpet till it came to rest at her side. Romance climbed lankily out of the bedroom window as she lay unconscious there. The big policeman who was the first to enter the room bent down and then straightened himself with an exclamation of amazement.

"Why, it's Mrs. Sparks, boys!" he announced. "Had a fine old do. She's as tight' as a wagon-load of monkeys. Would you believe it now? I've never seen her the worse for a drop before."

A companion pulled out the baize bag.

"She's getting the stuff all nicely packed to take away, and then she has to go and get blotto because she feels so safe. I ask you, Wally! Put her up against the wall till she comes to, will you?"

Mrs. Sparks opened her eyes and asked for water. She looked feeble and shaken. Under escort, staggering, she was allowed to go into the bedroom and get it. She had scarcely returned when the angry voice of a man who was obviously at war with the world was heard outside.

"I wonder why this dam door's open," the voice complained bitterly, and George Perivale walked into the room. Myra floated after him.

"I told you it was Paddington," she said sweetly, and then she screamed. While the two policemen fired explanations at them both, George Perivale looked at Mrs. Sparks, immobile on her chair. Mrs. Sparks looked at the floor. Myra Perivale, recovering, anxiously checked the silver. The story finished. George looked even harder at Mrs. Sparks. He wondered aloud if there was any explanation.

"She won't give none, Sir," one of the policemen said.

Myra announced: "There's nothing missing, George. I do wish you'd remembered it was Paddington."

"Will you stop harping on that?" George demanded. "Seems to me it's lucky I didn't." The forlornness of the silent Mrs. Sparks worried him. "What's the next step, Sergeant?"

The Sergeant indicated Mrs. Sparks with a significance which was sufficient answer. George shook his head.

"I don't want to prosecute," he said. "I've got to thank you boys there's nothing gone, and that's all that matters. I don't want a fuss. There won't be any trouble about that, will there?"

"It's just as you like, Mr. Perivale," the Sergeant answered, for George gave him the half-pound look, and there followed business with a note. In a minute or so they had gone. George turned savagely upon Mrs. Sparks.

"Got anything to say?"

"Nothing," answered Mrs. Sparks, fumbling her hands.

"I'm giving you a chance," said George. "It beats me. We liked you. We trusted you. I thought you liked us. You're not drunk now, are you? You're sobered up, aren't you?"

"No, Mr. Perivale. Yes, Mr. Perivale," answered fumbling Mrs. Sparks.

"What do you mean?" George made a gesture of exasperation.



While the two policemen fired explanations at them both, George Perivale looked at Mrs. Sparks, immobile in her chair. Mrs. Sparks looked at the floor.

"It wouldn't never not be any good—not saying nothing wouldn't," faltered Mrs. Sparks.

"We trusted you," George repeated. "And the moment our back's turned you're on the make. I wouldn't have believed it. You won't say anything. That finishes it. Get your things and get out—right out!"

The cat woke from a quiet dream, strolled in expectant of amusement, saw George in a dog mood, turned and strolled haughtily back. Mrs. Sparks stood up. She looked feeble and shaken—and strange about the eyes.

"I wouldn't have believed it myself. I *do* like you, Mr. Perivale—you and your Missis both. There ain't much in this *liking* people—"

"No?" said George, bewildered. "Hurry up."

"Do you mean you want me to go?"

"That's the idea."

Mrs. Sparks moved slowly to the kitchen. Myra began, "I never did think—"

"If there's anything about Paddington in what you want to tell me," advised George coldly, "please forget it."

Mrs. Sparks returned, very slowly. She might have been . . . the murmur of a real woman, so slowly she moved. She wore her black hat. A small package wrapped in her apron was under her arm.

"What's that you've got there?" George demanded.

"Something o' mine. It's nothin' belonging to you, Mr. Perivale."

George believed her. "Well, what are you waiting for?"

"I was wondering, now as you've come back, if Mrs. Perivale would like me to help her just for to-day," suggested Mrs. Sparks hungrily.

"She would not," said George finally. "I just want you to go. If you're hanging about for money, I gave you a pound this morning. You're lucky to leave so easily. You don't get any more money out of me! What are you laughing at?"

"I can't laugh," said Mrs. Sparks. "I wasn't laughing. I got a split lip."

Mrs. Sparks looked at them both. She faded, rather than went, from Flat No. 16. It had finished with her. She journeyed painfully till she came to the front door of Flat 14, the flat below the Perivales'. There was nothing to it—liking people. She hadn't been laughing. She was beginning to understand. Her last smile in the flat she had left had been a smile at Fate.

The Harringtons, in Flat 14, were away for a week. Mrs. Sparks, who "did" for them too, was looking after their flat. But very soon, perhaps, she would get the push all round. The police would let on. Or Mrs. Perivale. She unlocked the door laboriously, and went in. There was about her the air of a woman with a secret.

She opened, stealthily, the window of the bed-room exactly underneath the bed-room of the Perivales. A staging of the emergency fire-exit of the building was within easy reach. Upon the hard iron lay Stannerlee. He writhed and swore at her.

"I messed me blawsted ankle up," he complained grievously. "I done me ankle in for fair."

The widow Sparks spoke kind words.

"I see as you'd slipped, Stannerlee. 'An' you lef' yer cap behind, y' great gooch. I brought it to yer. Might save you a bit of trouble, me finding y' cap for yer. Take hold!"

"Brought the narks, ain't yer?" Suspicion eating him, Stannerlee took the cap she unwrapped from its concealing apron and snarled at her like a trapped thing. "Your fault I slipped and fell, y' old cow! Carncha let me alone? Gimme a charnce! Whadcha mean nosin' in rahnd 'ere when I got the knock? Y' guv'nor sent yer? Out with it!"

"They dunno. Nobody knows. The p'leece never spotted y'r cap, the lotta idiots—I *won* y'r cap for yer. I just come down to 'elp yer like," affirmed Mrs. Sparks.

Stannerlee lifted to an elbow and cursed her for a liar.

"See any green?" demanded Stannerlee. "Where's the p'leece gone? They knows I was after the stuff, don't they?"

"They does not." Mrs. Sparks spoke proudly. "They thinks it was me. They give me the boot proper. I got the push, Stannerlee."

"You?" It sank in while he stared at her, reading, not for the first time, the certain honesty of her homely little face. "You? That's a good 'un. You ain't the sort as 'ud steal a canary. Wadcha say to 'em?"

An unwary movement brought a twitch of pain, and he groaned.

"I didn't say nothing. I kep' me peace," said Mrs. Sparks. "Nobody knows nothing. You're orright, Stannerlee. You've just gotter come along with me."

He stared incredulously at her. She climbed out of the window and stood beside him.

"Hop off an' leave me to it," he commanded sternly. "What's your game? You're shoppin' me again, and y' know it! Hop it! 'Jear?"

Mrs. Sparks stooped and put her hands on his wriggling shoulders. He snarled again, "Wadcha doin'?"

"I'm givin' you that charnce you was gassin' about," she told him. "There's no one else to do it—keep quiet, you great cake. I'm not kiddin' to yer, Stannerlee—honest to Gawd! If you stop 'ere they'll find yer, an' y' can't walk on y'r own. You're up? That's the feller—lean on me."

Stannerlee leaned upon her. His lips moved without sound; he was a man suddenly lost on strange seas. Mean doctrines of the streets and the corner bar, of the training barracks where once he had been the worst lead-swing of them all, had equipped him ill for the reception of the idea of service without reward. The firm creeds of his life were suddenly become unstable. In his mind he grasped vainly at their retreating shadows.

Mrs. Sparks supplemented details of the happenings upstairs while she laboriously aided him to climb into Flat 14. A dazed and groping Stannerlee listened to her when she had carefully pulled down the window.

"We go out by the front an' there ain't a soul'll notice. Better shove yer cap on, Stannerlee—pull it down. I'll get yer a cab soon's one comes along, and you go off 'ome. An' you're to go straight after this, young Stannerlee—see!"

Leaning on her, Stannerlee made an effort to discover an answer to the riddles that obsessed. He caught one of her hands and squeezed it. Mrs. Sparks flamed at him.

"Don't you come that! That's all *finee*. Don't start any more of that stuff, young Stannerlee! I'm telling yer."

The mystery stung Stannerlee, and he voiced his wonder with a grudging bitterness.

"Then wadcha helpin' me for? After I done it on yer! After *they* done it on yer—the sack, I mean!" Fury came into his complaining. "Why doncha talk *sense*? You've got me upset—I dunno where to think next!"

"You just go straight, young Stannerlee," said Mrs. Sparks cheerfully. "Here we are. We'll be down in the street in a jiff."

They stood on the stone landing outside Flat 14. Stannerlee tried, and failed, to read some trick meaning into her patient smile. His puzzled absorption made him lean still more heavily on the little woman's shoulder. Suddenly he realised that she was having difficulty in reaching back for the front-door handle of Flat 14. For the first time in his life Stannerlee shut the door for a lady. Miracles happen. That was not the only miracle. To every man there comes one moment when a new life visions—

the chance of a new life—take it or leave it, but there you are. . . .

Stannerlee ceased to lean upon the shoulder of the widow Sparks. "What's the name of that guv'nor of yours?"

"Perivale. What's up?"

"That's my business," grumbled Stannerlee. "Leave go my arm—'jear? I wanta be on me own!"

To her amazement, he began to crawl heavily up the stairs—to Flat 16, Heathercroft Mansions, from which he had successfully escaped. She sent after him an uneasy whisper of alarm. He had gone clean potty. He must have. A fall did that sometimes.

"They're in, Stannerlee! I told you they was both come back!"

"Aar!" grunted Stannerlee.


The widow Sparks could only fidget in her alarm and her wonder. "You'll be awright, anyhow," Stannerlee called back mysteriously, and rested for a second on the landing of the Perivales' flat. Mrs. Sparks heard his heavy breathing. Then his ferocious knocking at the door above seemed to her like blasphemy—Heathercroft Mansions had never known such knocking. The silence was more terrific. She heard George Perivale open.

"I got something to tell yer, Mister Perivale," said Stannerlee. "I'm the chap 'as tried to pinch yer silver. Lend us a stick till I get in, will yer?"

THE END.



A staging of the emergency fire-exit of the building was within easy reach. Upon the hard iron lay Stannerlee. He writhed and swore at her.



AILLIE and the AIRDOO WHEELS

by ERNEST RAYMOND.

Illustrated by
JOHN CAMPBELL.

THE
ROYAL HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

He went out into the streets of Temple Gowring and became a sandwich-man.

THERE'S no more familiar figure walking the streets of Temple Gowring than Mr. Cordelwain. Nor is there one that has stirred more speculation. It's difficult, as he wanders from pavement to pavement, or floats unshaven among the newspaper stands in the Public Reading Room, to guess at his age. The long limbs and the narrow waist are young enough, but the rounded shoulders seem old and dilapidated furniture; so does the peering head, always thrown in advance of his chest, as if its long nose, still further advanced, were looking for something—work, maybe, or the price of a meal! His smile, when addressed, is exceedingly cordial—the few who have spoken to him are agreed on this—but more remarkable is his voice, rich, cultured, and drawing. His clothes vary. We have seen him on Monday so adequately dressed that, with his aristocratic nose, he might hold his own in fashionable parks; this has been after some of his wealthy relatives, in a returning mercy, have supplied him with a dole. But on Wednesday week he has been back again in derelict garments, his right hand closing his jacket at the throat, both to conceal the nakedness of his breast and to keep out the cold.

Mr. Cordelwain, you have guessed, is one of those who have never been able to earn money for more than a fortnight at a time. Nor is he able to keep it, if he has earned it or obtained it by other means. When a relenting relative has given him a ten-pound note, he likes to treat to the theatre the two people who have always (under protest) been good to him; and, if the first act palls, he likes to be free to come out for a walk; and, should the walk weary him, to be free to buy another ticket and rejoin his beneficiaries for the last act. Easily bored, he likes variety. Indeed, it is this need for variety that has undone him. It inhibited during his schooldays at Marlborough any continuous application to work; and it has done the same thing ever since. He had to abandon medicine, as his delicacy was early repulsed by the insides of people. Of casual labour at the docks he soon wearied, telling his maiden Aunt Irene, one of the two people who had always (under protest) been good to him, that work and companions more intellectual would induce in him a more sympathetic condition. He couldn't, he said, somehow, respond to the wharfside. And when his Aunt Irene, with whom he had been staying in the daily expectation of the appearance of this more congenial employment, told him that her straitened circumstances wouldn't permit her to keep him after Friday next, he went out into the streets of Temple Gowring and became a sandwich-man (partly as a rebuke to Aunt Irene). He carried on his long, bent back the boards advertising the Horticultural Society's Annual Show. O' nights he came home to sleep in Aunt Irene's garret, declaring that it would no doubt please his opulent relations to hear that he was in the gutter at last. But after a fortnight between the boards he took his wages and threw up the work. It made his back ache.

"If you will allow me," said he to Aunt Irene, "I will pay you a reasonable rent for my garret (as I have no desire to take an undue advantage of your kindness), while I look about me for an occupation less purely animal."

During the period of unemployment that followed, Mr. Cordelwain would have enjoyed a greater chance of securing stipendiary work, had he not suddenly found the Gospel, seen light in it, and been saved. He felt called, then, to testify at street corners and on public squares. It was a case with him, as he told Aunt Irene, of "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." And in the course of his ministry, he collected in the lining of his cap three shillings and eightpence in thrown coppers; which, since they were the offerings of the faithful, he refused to keep for himself, and gave to the deserving cause of foreign missions. But the three and eightpence was the measure of his success, and he found that he could no longer continue his testimony owing to the hardness of people's hearts. "They're Gospel-hardened, one and all," he told Aunt Irene.

"I no longer feel moved to speak to them as I used to. Temple Gowring is utterly pagan."

Two months passed, during which Society showed no symptoms of a sense that it had a duty to Mr. Cordelwain, and he could only apologise to Aunt Irene that his necessitous circumstances obliged him to increase his indebtedness to her. Aunt Irene scarcely met this apology in the right spirit. She informed him that her own necessitous circumstances had obliged her to write to his wealthier relatives, telling them that they had got to do something to relieve her of such a burden. For once in a way the relatives responded. While grumbling that they had long ago abandoned responsibility for Mr. Cordelwain, and that she was unwise in encouraging him, they yet offered to make a last effort to set him in the way of a living. Remembering his present state of salvation, they arranged for him to go to a Salvation Army Colony, to be trained for work on the land in Canada. Mr. Cordelwain was pleased. He felt that this was work that he would do well. Nor was it seriously unsuited to one of his family and condition. The Cordelwains had been landed gentry since the Plantagenets. So, after a farewell to the two people who had always been good to him, in which he thanked them for having fed him when he was hungry and clothed him when he was naked, and promised them their full-measured reward in the hereafter, he went off with his bundle and took up his studies on the Salvation Army's green acres of downland. Evidently the Army authorities had small faith in their students, for the Colony's enclosing walls were high. A shorter man than Mr. Cordelwain could not have climbed them. A hundred miles stretched between the Colony and Temple Gowring, where all his interests were; and Mr. Cordelwain had to walk all the way, when he decided to escape from those oppressive walls, and return to his friends. He arrived very footsore at Aunt Irene's door; and, on her indignant enquiry as to why he had returned, he explained: "It stifled me, Aunt Irene. Those walls! I felt I lacked the larger freedom. I tell you it stifled me."

II.

The other person who was always kind to him was Aillie's grandmother, Mrs. Warminster. Mrs. Warminster was Aunt Irene's lifelong friend. She was a good woman, and kind to all people. Just as she had accepted charge of the orphaned Aillie, so she frequently helped Mr. Cordelwain, or listened sympathetically to Aunt Irene when, by the hour, she complained of him as a parasite. Once Aillie overheard such a conversation, but her six-year-old mind never imagined that they could be speaking in other than high terms of anyone so jolly, and so patently a man of God, as Mr. Cordelwain. "Parasite," she conceived, since Mr. Cordelwain was an evangelist, to be etymologically connected with Paradise. Truly the language in which Aillie thought, though it resembled phonetically that spoken by her grandmother and the servant, Lucy, had remarkable differences in connotation. There was, for instance, the terrific word, "Wuncenfraw!" an ultimatum full of implacable certainties. With this word you gave the final emphasis to a prohibition. "I forbid you to do it, wuncenfraw!" Then there was that romantic currency called "lover-money," whose purchasing power was so much higher than any other. How often would Lucy the servant say: "I could hardly get it for Lover-money"? Then those gay and delightful people, the Airdoo wheels, most agreeable of all professional people. Mr. Cordelwain was the outstanding one. Lucy the servant, who seemed full of a laughing admiration for him, often called him an Airdoo wheel. The title was apparently synonymous with the less attractive terms, "Cure," and "Caution." For Lucy was quite as likely to say: "Oh, he's a Cure," or "He's a Caution," as to say, "He's an Airdoo wheel." So all these terms came to connote to Aillie a person of saintly life and much leisure; of a quite unusual readiness to play noisy games in green places; of a quickness of apprehension in the matter of games that was much

above the ordinary; and of very creditable powers of invention. That was Mr. Cordelwain, as Lucy might have said, to a "t." It simply didn't admit of dispute that he was the most brilliantly gifted and exciting person to play games with. How wonderfully he would ensnare Ailie into calling herself a donkey! "If I say I'm a brass lock, you're to say 'I'm a brass key.'" Who was to suspect that he'd go on and say, "I'm a don lock," and oblige Ailie to reply, "I'm a don key"? Ailie roared with laughter at this skilful trepanning, but Mr. Cordelwain laughed louder.

"And now," continued he, "whatever I say I did this morning, you've got to say, 'Just like me.'"

"Yes, yes." Ailie accepted all conditions.

"I got up this morning."

"Just like me."

"I looked out of the window."

"Just like me."

"I saw a donkey."

"Just like me."

Instantly Mr. Cordelwain roared with laughter, and Ailie echoed him. It was really very clever.

He knew all about cricket, too. From him Ailie first learned that the batsman was out if the woolly ball which she hit was caught. But, at the first sight of her disappointment, Mr. Cordelwain agreed rather sportingly that she wouldn't have hit it up in the air, had she known that the rules were so strict; and Ailie continued at the wicket. Mr. Cordelwain did his best to catch the woolly ball again, but he never repeated his first success, fumbling and dropping the slippery thing, and calling himself (not unjustly, as it seemed to Ailie) by the rude name of "Butter-fingers."

But the best game was that of finding farthings in the heather.

"Shall we go and see if they've dropped any farthings, to-day?" asked Mr. Cordelwain, on an Easter Tuesday, after the common people had gone back to work. "They" were these same people who, on holidays, lay vulgarly about in the heather.

"Oh, let's," agreed Ailie enthusiastically; and they set off for the common. After a silence, Ailie looked up into Mr. Cordelwain's face.

"Do you think there'll be any to-day?" she enquired.

Mr. Cordelwain wrinkled his brow with thought.

"Oh, I think so," he said at length. "Yes, I think so. You see, so many people lying about as they do, the farthings are almost sure to drop out of their pockets."

Even before they arrived at the common, Ailie ran ahead, and began to examine the heather with the zeal of a terrier looking for a far-thrown stone. But not a coin could she see. And yet, no sooner had Mr. Cordelwain come up than he removed his right hand from his pocket, and, pointing to a patch of gorse, said—

"Why, there's one. Dear me, how short-sighted you are!"

And, before Ailie could run and find it, he had got there first, picked it up, and given it to her.

"And there's another," cried he, turning round. "Well, I never! It's incredible!"

"Where, where?" demanded Ailie.

"Why, there. Don't you see?"

Ailie looked, but couldn't see it; so Mr. Cordelwain was compelled to stoop down and produce it from under a leaf.

"It's hardly likely we shall find any more," submitted Ailie nervously, as she took it, and wandered along by his side.

"I don't know. I don't know," demurred Mr. Cordelwain, with an expression of hopeful doubt. "There were a lot of people here last night. And there's influenza abroad. And what with drawing out their hankies to blow their noses, it's amazing how many farthings get scattered. Why, look! Isn't that one there? Or is it a button?"

"Where?"

"There, little silly, under your very eyes."

Ailie studied carefully under her very eyes, but, observing nothing, looked up at Mr. Cordelwain, and then followed along the line of his triumphant glance. But no, there was only heather and stones and some torn bits of paper.

"You'll have to get spectacles, you know," warned Mr. Cordelwain. "Why, I can even see its date. 1884, or I'm much mistaken." And he picked it up to ascertain. "There you are, 1884."

"That's three," said Ailie. "It would be nice if we could make it a penny. Can you stay a little longer?"

"Certainly. Certainly," agreed the obliging Mr. Cordelwain. "I can give you the whole afternoon. It's an enchanting occupation."

"I feel I shall find the next," said Ailie, glancing up.

"I feel I shall," announced Mr. Cordelwain.

"I'm sure I shall," corrected Ailie, shaking her head.

"I know I shall," persisted Mr. Cordelwain.

"Bet you I will," offered Ailie, after thought.

"Bet you all your three farthings I will," agreed Mr. Cordelwain.

"That's to say," calculated Ailie, "that, if I do find it first, I shall get four more farthings altogether. You'll have to give me another three."

"Yes, but you needn't be anxious about me," replied Mr. Cordelwain with great significance.

Ailie seemed in doubt. His knowledge was very great.

"I'll try it," she decided.

Mr. Cordelwain shrugged his shoulders.

"Right you are! But it's rash."

It certainly was rash; and Ailie experienced all the gambler's mental disorder, the suspense and the despairs. She was slightly encouraged,



"Mind?" exclaimed Mr. Cordelwain. "Why should I mind, when there are so many more I can easily find? Why, look. Here." And he picked up one.

however, by her rival's negligence and really unwarrantable over-confidence. For the most part he was staring at the sky. She felt justified in taking full advantage of this, and hunted the more assiduously. But, while she was yet scouring a thicket, she heard him say—

"I'll thank you to give me your three farthings, Miss."

A sob of disappointment arose in Ailie's throat as she exclaimed: "Why?"

"Because, unless I'm seriously mistaken, I've seen one."

"Where?" she demanded, looking down, both to see the coin and hide her tears.

"There," explained Mr. Cordelwain, with a provoking apathy; and stooped down and picked up an indubitable farthing. "So, if it's convenient for you to—"

Still keeping her face down, she passed over her three farthings.

Mr. Cordelwain jingled them in his palm, seeming in doubt what to do next.

"I bet you all these four farthings I find the next one," he suddenly burst out.

Ailie stared right away over the common.

"No, I don't think I'll bet any more."

"Oh, nonsense, nonsense!" protested Mr. Cordelwain. "Fudge, fudge! It's only fair that you should have your chance of revenge."

Ailie shook her head, being in no condition to speak.

"And then," pursued Mr. Cordelwain, in a voice strangely soft, "you'll have five, if you win—if you see the next. Done, did you say? Right. That's settled. Come along." And he jingled the valuable prizes that awaited the adventurous.

Ailie surreptitiously wiped her eyes, so as to be able to see farthings, but she had not much hope.

"I never find them," she complained, as they walked on. "You always do."

"All the more reason why you should now," expounded Mr. Cordelwain. "Law of Probability, you know."

They had reached an open patch of worn grass, when Mr. Cordelwain, looking up into the sky, sought instruction from his companion.

"Now, would that be a hawk, or a lark?"

Immediately Ailie's gaze followed his.

"There's no bird there," she said.

"No?" echoed Mr. Cordelwain, in faint surprise. "Perhaps I was mistaken. Well, let's see if there are any farthings just here."

Ailie gave a scream of delight.

"Here's one! Here's one! I've found one!" And she pounced on it to secure her priority.

"Go on! You don't say so!" exclaimed Mr. Cordelwain. "Well, I never!" And, abiding honourably by his wager, he handed over all four farthings with only a mild "boo-hoo!"

Ailie took them doubtfully.

"Sure you don't mind?" she asked.

"Mind? Mind?" exclaimed Mr. Cordelwain. "Why should I mind, when there are so many more I can easily find. Why, look. Here." And he picked up one. "And here, see. 'Stonishing! . . . And here again. 'Stroordinary! . . . And here. 'S'marvellous! . . . Why, they're all over the place. And there, look. Oh, it's monotonous. It's wearisome. I've got five, too, now." He showed her them. "And now, having spent such a profitable afternoon, we'd best go home."

And they walked back with the confident and satisfied air of the financially successful.

"And are these farthings lover-money?" queried Ailie.

Mr. Cordelwain, it would seem, was never beaten by his partner's language.

"Oh, I should say so," he opined. "Oh yes, I fancy so. And what do you yourself understand by lover-money? Not as much as I do!"

"It's sort of better money than ordinary money," Ailie explained.

"Yes, it's that. Yes. But it's more. It's money that's only found by the most excellent people. That's why we ought to be very proud of our afternoon's work. Only the very best people can see farthings in the heather. If you're naughty you'll never see them. But if you're always good and kind—"

In despair at being able to describe the wealth that awaited Ailie, if she were always good and kind, Mr. Cordelwain threw up his hands and his eyes.

III.

Directly Ailie got home, she rushed to tell her grandmother, Mrs. Warminster, of their lucrative afternoon. Mrs. Warminster, of course, was Ailie's final fount of wisdom. How could she be other than perfectly wise, who was so old, and replete with authority? The decisions that she promulgated from her sewing-chair were *ex cathedra* and

infallible. It was hardly to be expected that one so august should give the attention to Ailie's prattle that Mr. Cordelwain gave to it, but she listened as graciously as her sewing would permit, till Ailie said: "The first bet he won everything from me, and the second bet I won everything back again."

Then Mrs. Warminster looked up.

"He didn't teach you. . . . You didn't do any real betting, I hope, Ailie dear. You mustn't do that, you know. And certainly not with Mr. Cordelwain." She laid down her sewing, and seemed to deliberate whether to say any more. At last she drew Ailie to her, and put an arm about her shoulder. "Ailie, I want you to promise that you'll never give any money to Mr. Cordelwain—or take any either. . . . You can't understand, of course, but he's not really a good man."

Ailie opened her eyes wide. She stared in bewilderment at her grandmother. She was faintly conscious of a complete deranging of all values. "Not good? Mr. Cordelwain not good!" Then what was the meaning of the word good? The shock, and the rather frightening confusion that resulted, caused her eyes to become moist and her body restive under her grandmother's arm.

"Is he bad, then?"

"No, no; he's hardly bad. He's just what's called a ne'er-do-weel."

Ailie looked up with only increased bewilderment.

"Oh, yes; but I knew he was that."

Mrs. Warminster's glance was now as confused as Ailie's.

"If you knew he was that, you should be careful."

Dark remark! Was there, then, something sinister about the gaiety and the attractiveness of the Airdoo wheels? Mrs. Warminster saw the moisture of frightened bewilderment in Ailie's eyes, so she patted her back and said: "There, there."

Run away now. Of course, you can't understand."

Ailie ran away to a seat in the window, on to which she climbed, that she might gaze at the garden. She had to effect some readjustments.

If it was incredible that Mr. Cordelwain wasn't good, it was also incredible that Mrs. Warminster was a blasphemer, in that she called good evil, and evil good. Or was it that Ailie didn't know what was good, and what wasn't?

She climbed down from her seat, and ran out to find Lucy, the maid.

"Lucy," she asked, "what's an Airdoo wheel?"

"Someone who's no good to nobody," answered Lucy promptly. "A person no one reckons much to."

Then grandmother was right, since Lucy endorsed her. The testimony of two such authoritative people was overwhelming.

But how could it be? The five farthings, which all this time had remained clenched in her hand, were solid evidence of the excellent qualities of Mr. Cordelwain, since only the best people could find them in the heather.

She laid the whole matter before

Lucy, who laughed gaily.

"Lor, goosey! 'E put 'em there. They're always slap-dash, that kind, with money as 'ardly belongs to 'em."

Ailie wandered away. There was no doubt that the prosecution were winning, but she was loth to give up the defendant. If all that Lucy said were true, these farthings were no lover-money, able to purchase more than most. But he had said they were. It was clear that he could be vindicated to-morrow morning, when she offered the farthings over the counter of the confectioner's.

IV.

"Will you tell me, please," said Ailie politely to the man behind the counter, "how much mixed drops this'll buy?"

"This," said the man. "This is five farthings, missy. It'll buy you two ounces and a half."

"Thank you," acknowledged Ailie, wondering that she could be so sick with disappointment. "I'll take two ounces and a half."

And, when the bag was made up, she took it, and walked out of the shop.

Ailie's readjustment was complete. But it was bought at the price of disenchantment. The gay and delightful company of the Airdoo wheels disappeared into the mists. And with them went the belief that lover-money waited under the heather for those who were always good and kind. Only remained the dark and disturbing Ne'er-do-weels, whom Lucy had defined.

And, if Lucy's definition be correct, that "a Ne'er-do-weel is someone who's no good to anybody," I suppose Mr. Cordelwain only became the complete ne'er-do-weel that moment, when his last stronghold fell.

THE END.



"Lucy," she asked, "what's an Airdoo wheel?"

THE MOTHERLAND.

WITH PICTURES OF TYPICAL BRITISH SCENERY BY WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS.

"This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This precious stone set in the silver sand,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England."

"I DO consider England (and, of course, you must include Scotland and Ireland) the most beautiful country in the world," said William Black's Queen Titania, at the close of the journey in the famous Phaeton. That is an old story now, and perhaps our younger readers of to-day would think it curiously unsophisticated, and even at times a little banal; but elder people like to turn back to it now and then, not only for its curious and accurate reflection of English life in the early 'seventies, but also for its pictures of English scenery. Queen Titania in her patriotic fervour fell into those feminine italics which were a failing of her period, and, taking in her enthusiasm "wide and wider sweeps" (like the parson, Holmes, in the prologue to "Morte d'Arthur"), she went on to say: "I have never been to America, but that does not matter. It cannot be more beautiful than England. If it is, so much the better; but I, for one, am satisfied with England."

That opinion did not hinder her, however, from giving Scotland due justice. The novel ends, as some of you will remember, with a description of Edinburgh on a summer night. Black's word-picture may not have the pointed fineness, the spiritual throb, of Stevenson's nocturne on the Calton Hill, with its vision of the "town, blue and darkling on her hills," and the musical accompaniment from the castle, when "the drums and bugles begin to recall the scattered garrison; the air thrills with the sound; the bugles sing aloud; and the last rising flourish mounts and melts into the darkness like a star: a martial swan-song, fitly rounding in the labours of the day." No; effects like that are not to be sought in the more diffuse novelist of the Highlands and salmon-



HOMELAND PASTURES WITHIN SIGHT OF THE SEA: "THE MILL." BY GEORGE L. BEHREND, R.B.A.



THE CHARM OF THE HOME COUNTRIES:
"IN A SUSSEX VALLEY."
BY VIVIAN ROLT, R.B.A.

fishing, but I am not sure that Stevenson's Edinburgh vignette does not owe something to Black's. Black has the right feeling, and the night-shrouded Edinburgh he had in mind drew from Titania the words, "Oh, my dear, we have seen nothing like that, even in your own country of the Lakes."

The charm of English landscape cannot be effaced by grander scenery, at least, for the native-born. Ruskin notes this as a characteristic of Turner. "With all his heart he was attached to the narrow meadows and rounded knolls of England; by all his imagination he was urged to the reverence of endless vales and measureless hills; nor could any scene be too contracted for his love, or too vast for his ambition. Hence when he returned to English scenery after his first studies in Savoy and Dauphiné, he was continually endeavouring to reconcile old fondnesses with new sublimities; and, as in Switzerland he chose rounded Alps for the love of Yorkshire, so in Yorkshire he exaggerated the

scale, in memory of Switzerland, and gave to Ingleborough, seen from Hornby Castle, in great part the expression of cloudy majesty and height which he had seen in the Alps from Grenoble. We must continually remember these two opposite instincts when we examine the Turnerian topography of his subject of Bolton Abbey."

Ruskin did not know in what district of England Turner first or longest studied, but the critic thought he could trace most definitely throughout the artist's works the influence of Yorkshire. "It is, I believe, to these broad wooded steeps and swells of the Yorkshire downs that we, in part, owe the singular massiveness that prevails in Turner's mountain drawing, and gives it one of its chief elements of grandeur."

To Ruskin himself no landscape was fully satisfying without the presence or the suggestion of mountains. If he had "no hope or association of this kind," if he could not deceive himself into "fancying that perhaps at the next rise of the road there may be the film of a blue hill in the gleam of the sky at the horizon, the landscape, however beautiful, produces in me a kind of sickness and pain." Even the incomparable views from Richmond Hill and Windsor Terrace he would exchange for the slightest suggestion of mountain scenery. In this he confessed to idiosyncrasy, and knew himself as a representative of the modern landscape instinct. To the ancients mountains were only

(Continued overleaf.)



A STately HOME OF ENGLAND: "IN DUNSTER PARK, SOMERSET." BY A. CARRUTHERS GOULD R.B.A.



THE QUIET BEAUTY OF EAST ANGLIA: "SOUTHWOLD, FROM WALBERSWICK."
BY PERCY LANCASTER, R.B.A., A.R.E.

repellent, fierce and inhospitable; Dante saw them only as violent and cruel, and mountain-climbing for pleasure seemed mere madness. The pioneer of that recreation was Petrarch, who with toil and terror made the ascent of Mount Ventoux. But the poet's adventure did not set a fashion. The abhorrence of mountains died hard, and mountaineering as a recreation did not come into favour until the nineteenth century. Even then the old horror persisted, and in Miss Ferrier's "Marriage," Lady Juliana took the Dantesque view of Lochmarlie. The author herself was alive to the "matchless beauty" of the scene—the "dark-blue waters reflecting, as in a mirror, every surrounding object, and bearing on its placid transparent bosom a fleet of herring boats, the drapery of whose black suspended nets contrasted with picturesque effect with the white sails of the larger vessels, which were vainly spread to catch the breeze. All around, rocks, meadows, woods, and hills mingled in wild and lovely irregularity." The heroine, however, was not moved. She "thought it might be very pretty, if, instead of those frightful rocks and shabby cottages, there could be villas, and gardens, and lawns, and conservatories, and summer houses, and statues."

We have moved far from that artificiality; the nature and romantic poets introduced a new feeling for landscape, and never before have the English people responded so warmly to the charm of English scenery as they do to-day. The cult of the week-end country cottage, a cult begotten of the desire to escape from the imprisonment of Town, began to take hold in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and since then the increased ease of transport has made it an institution. Lately



PASTURES AND PEACE BESIDE THE DORSET SEA: "THE BAY FROM ABOVE LODMOOR, WEYMOUTH." BY J. WILLIAM HEPBURN, A.R.B.A.



HOME LIGHTS AT EVENFALL, IN KENT: "THE UNDERCLIFF, MAIDSTONE, AT TWILIGHT."
BY ALEX MACLEAN, M.A., R.B.A.

too, those who control the means of travel have seen the lure of scenery, and have enlisted the artist's aid to bring the pleasant places of the land before the eyes of their countrymen. They have taken care, too, that the pictures they offer shall be worthy of the scenes represented, and every railway station is now a picture-gallery of masterpieces, before which one is justified in lingering to admire. For, in most cases, the work is admirable.

Every phase of English landscape finds its reflection there—the "blunt, low-headed, whale-backed downs" of "Sussex by the sea," the gleaming chalk cliffs, the Yorkshire moors, the vales of Derbyshire and the dales of Westmoreland, the bold dark Cornish coast, the soft Cotswolds, the Welsh mountains, and the Scottish Highlands and lochs are broadcast optically to teach the people in what a fair land their lot is cast. It may be commercial art, but it is commercial art at its very best, a persuasion that ought to tempt the public not only to travel, but to visit our national collections, and see the greater examples of landscape painting gathered there. The critic already much quoted here would possibly not have approved of this pressing of pictorial art into the service of railway-travel, for his opinion of mechanical transport is well known, and it was the reverse of complimentary; but he could hardly have denied that the works exhibited to this end are often right in feeling and workmanship, and that they help those who look at them to realise something of that reverence with which he regarded natural beauty. It inspired him with "an instinctive awe, mixed with delight; an indefinable thrill, such as we sometimes imagine to indicate the presence of a disembodied spirit. I could only feel this perfectly when I was alone; and then it would make me shiver from head to foot with the joy and fear of it, when after being for some time

away from hills, I first got to the shore of a mountain river where the brown water circled among the pebbles, or when I first saw the swell of distant land against the sunset, or the first low broken wall, covered with mountain moss. . . . Observe, my pleasure was chiefly when I first got into beautiful scenery out of London."

In that Ruskin's own experience was closely akin to Turner's. He traces the artist's early impressions in the heart of the city, and then his gradual escape by way of Twickenham and the river, where "of swans and reedy shores he now learns the soft motion and the green mystery, in a way not to be forgotten. And at last fortune wills that the lad's true life shall begin. . . . he finds himself sitting alone among the Yorkshire hills. For the first time, the silence of Nature round him, her freedom sealed to him, her glory opened to him. Peace at last; no roll of cart-wheel, nor mutter of sullen voices in the back-shop; but curlew-cry in space of heaven and welling of bell-toned streamlet by its shadowy rock. . . . behold, far as foot or eye can race or range, the moor, and cloud. Loveliness at last. It is here, then, among these deserted vales. . . . Pride of purple rocks, and river pools of blue, and tender wildness of glittering trees, and misty lights of evening on immeasurable hills. . . . So taught, and prepared for his life's labour, sate the boy at last alone among his fair English hills; and began to paint, with cautious toil, the rocks, and fields, and trickling brooks, and soft white clouds of heaven."

So, like Wordsworth, the painter would connect

"The landscape with the quiet of the sky."

In all but a few districts, quietness is the dominant note of the English landscape, and there lies its charm and its power.
[Continued opposite.]



A PEACEFUL ENGLISH WATERWAY: "A STUDY OF RESTING DRIFTERS, BOSTON, Lincs." BY CHARLES INCE, R.B.A.



THE AUTUMN BEAUTY OF THE MOTHERLAND: "A NOVEMBER MORNING." BY ERNEST W. HASLEHURST, R.B.A.

That is what has given its note of subdued harmony to the best of English nature poetry. It is the romance of quietude—

"These hedgerows hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up in silence, from among the trees."

This tranquil spirit of English scenery marked the earlier period of Turner, in which, in the opinion of his great critic, all the finest works are "without exception views or quiet single thoughts. The Calder Bridge is a most pure and

beautiful example. The Ivy Bridge I imagine to be later, but its rock foreground is altogether unrivalled, and remarkable for its delicacy of detail; a butterfly is seen settled on one of the large brown stones in the midst of the torrent, a bird is about to seize it, while its companion, crimson-winged, flits idly on the surface of one of the pools of the stream, thus telling us its extreme stillness."

The English landscape owes much to climate, which lends it its veiled and melting distances. Only on rare days are the further hills clear cut as distant Alp or Apennine. This is no cause for complaint. "Our green country depends for its life on those kindly rains and floating swirls of cloud; we ought, therefore, to

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IN COUNTRY FAMOUS FOR A GREAT ENGLISH RACE MEETING:
"NEAR GOODWOOD." BY W. E. WILLATS, A.R.B.A.

love them to paint them." But there is an exhilaration in clear weather, such a day, for example, as that which lights up a coastwise scene with an emerald brilliancy of nearer fields leading on to sunlit shores above which sleeps a strip of sapphire sea melting to deepest ultramarine, and further still the flashing line of cliff, sharp to the horizon. And over all, a huddle of windy cloud, flecked with blue. Clear weather, too, is best for revealing the whole beauty of tame and flat lands, such as those about Southwold. But, given the right sky and air, there is no wearisome monotony in the wide green tracts and slow water-courses. In these regions, as in the country of rolling downs near the sea, it is the sky that counts, and he is a wise painter who, in his handling of such scenes, keeps his horizon low, and makes his sky-space ample.

Take it where and how you will, the English scene is rewarding in every aspect. The greater effects of mountain landscape must be sought elsewhere, and those who have been brought up in grander surroundings may always have a sense of something missing, when no line of hills near or distant closes the vista. But, for gentle peace and soft harmony, the English pastoral landscape, with its "happy autumn fields," its nestling woods, its sliding rivers, its windmills on the ridge, its great wide sunlit spaces of park land set with noble trees, has no rival in the world. These are the pictures which the exile carries to the ends of the earth, and it is to these that he would return, for nothing that he has seen in all his travels can speak to him in just the same language. Their influence has entered into the blood of the race, and the sons of the British overseas who have never seen the cliffs of Dover or the pleasant places of the West and North and Midland country, still



AMONG THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HILLS: "IN A COTSWOLD VALLEY."
BY GEORGE H. DOWNING, R.B.A.

speaking of England as "home," and count upon one day making a homing pilgrimage. It is the peculiar gift of England that even her quietest regions can inspire this poetical love and devotion. Kipling has sung of the Sussex Downs—

We have no waters to delight,
Our broad and brookless vales—
Only the dew-pond on the height
Unfed, that never fails,
Whereby no tattered herbage tells
Which way the season flies—
Only our wind-bit thyme that smells
Like dawn in Paradise.



A RIVER SCENE IN AN OLD SHROPSHIRE TOWN: "THE BRIDGE,
LUDLOW: MORNING." BY A. E. COOPER, A.B.A.



A TYPICAL COAST SCENE: "LOW TIDE." BY HERBERT P. WEAVER,
A.R.B.A., A.R.C.A.

And he rejoices that

"... the lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!"

It is the county of Richard Jefferies, who wrote of it: "Lands of gold have been found, and lands of sweet spices and precious merchandise, but this is the land of health." It is the land of beauty, too, with its far vistas of the weald, and its glimpses of shimmering sea. But Sussex is only one phase of the natural beauty of England, infinite in its variety and charm, the perpetual inspiration of the poet and the landscape painter.

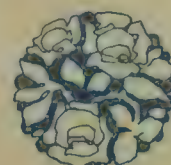
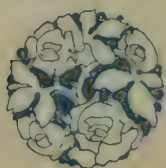
The Legends of the Flowers: The Rose.



The Birth of the Sweetest Flower: The Angel Gabriel Salutes the Blessed Virgin, and the First Rose Blooms.

The Rose is not only the emblem of our country, the very soul of summer, and the sweetest of all the blooms in an English garden, but is a flower interwoven with the mystic legends of our religion, and is closely associated with the Virgin Mary. The legend of the rose's birth is that when Gabriel saluted the Blessed Virgin, "the Rose wherein the Word Divine was made incarnate," her namesake first sprang from the earth, and twined itself into a sweet-scented arbour above her head.

FROM THE PICTURE BY ELEANOR F. BRICKDALE.



The Legends of the Flowers: Holly.



Set Free by Christmas to Unite in Christian Rejoicings: The Little People of Fairyland Join the Carol-Singers.

Holly, the Christmas bush with its lacquered green leaves and gay red berries, is associated in every mind with the Christmas season, and yet how few of us know all the legends that twine about the tree! For instance, at this season the restrictions on the Little People of Fairyland are loosed. At no other time may they stay to hear the name of Our Lord mentioned; but at this sacred season they have been known to appear and actually to join the carol singers under the Holly Tree

FROM THE PICTURE BY ELEANOR F. BRICKDALE.

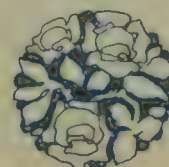
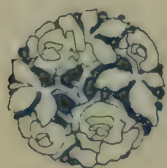
The Legends of the Flowers: The Lavender.



How the Lavender Came to Smell of Paradise: The Blessed Virgin Dries Our Lord's Swaddling Clothes on its Scented Bush.

Lavender, the cool, scented herb, whose perfume conjures up visions of peace and suggests the charm of an old-world sheltered life, is a summer spice associated in legend with the Blessed Virgin. It was, runs the tale, a scentless bush until the Mother of Our Lord dried His swaddling clothes upon its misty blue spikes. In honour of Him the perfume which "breathes of Paradise" came as a gift to the Lavender, and it has retained the heavenly smell until this day.

FROM THE PICTURE BY ELEANOR F. BRICKDALE.



The Legends of the Flowers: The Four-Leaved Clover.



The Elfin Rout made Visible by the Four-Leaved Clover: The Meadow Treasure as the Key to Fairyland.

Many are the legends which are entwined about the Four-Leaved Clover, that wonderful luck-bringing meadowland treasure; and the old country tale runs that those who find it and keep their discovery a secret may use it as the gate to Fairyland. He or she who holds a four-leaved clover may behold the high pomp and state of the Little People, and see the elfin rout of brownies, goblins, fairies, and the like go riding by on the soft summer breeze, and be transported into the strange intermediate world of Fairyland.

FROM THE PICTURE BY ELEANOR F. BRICKDALE.



A CONVALESCENT'S CHRISTMAS.

FROM THE PAINTING ENTITLED "CONVALESCENTE," BY JULES ALEXIS MUENIER, EXHIBITED AT THE PARIS SALON
(SOCIÉTÉ DES ARTISTES FRANÇAIS), 1924.

The Widow's Loan

by **Vicente Blasco Ibañez**

Illustrated by
Warwick Reynolds



WHEN Rosalindo Ovejero announced that he was going into town to attend the festival in honour of Our Lord of the Miracles, the famous Christ of Salta, all the inhabitants of his little valley, shut in between two spurs of the Andes, went to his house to entrust all sorts of pious errands to him.

Years before, when business was good and trade between Salta and the saltpetre mines of Chili and Southern Bolivia was active, there had always been plenty of muleteers rich enough and patriotic enough to pay the way of all their neighbours to the festival.

In those days the whole valley, you might say, used to go down to Salta—a veritable army of men and women on horseback, escorting a mule in brilliant trappings laden with an image of the Infant Jesus. Those in charge of the excursions took careful pains to see that the splendour of the valley patron's adornments should far surpass anything that saints from other places could boast of.

The journey from the valley into town took never more than two days. The return trip, on the other hand, often lasted three weeks. On their way back the pilgrims stopped at all the villages along the road to parade their patron in his glory. At all such places dancing would begin at noon and last till midnight.

Not infrequently these return journeys, where the resting periods were much longer than the marches, were disturbed by quarrels and bloodshed; but no one was shocked on that account. A crowd of men inured to the hardships of the mountain trails, and armed to the teeth every one of them, could hardly be expected to live together week in and week out, drinking and dancing with women, without knives being drawn occasionally!

This, however, was in the old days.

Now there were no rich drivers left to furnish the hundred doubloons or more required for an old-fashioned pilgrimage with the Infant Jesus. The most successful trailmen had moved away from the valley. Only a few of the poorer sort were still hanging on, doing odd jobs as expressmen for merchants in Salta, who had dealings with El Paposo in Chili, or with Tarija in Bolivia. Rosalindo Ovejero was the only one who still kept up the old traditions; and Rosalindo—well, he never missed the trip into town to escort Our Lord of the Miracles on the latter's solemn procession about the city streets.

The moment Rosalindo had fixed the time for his departure, the old adobe ranch house, which he had inherited from his father and his grandfather, began to fill with visitors. Women would come and tell him down to the last detail all the diseases which the miraculous image had cured for them. "A promise to visit the Christ of Salta—and a plaster—and I was well again!" They couldn't make the trip this year, but wouldn't Rosalindo speak for them?

Every such request for an errand was emphasised with a peso note.

"Take this, brother, and buy the biggest candle you can find. Remember your poor old mother was a great friend of mine."

Then there would be men, also—poor mule-drivers of the Chilian trail, with faces wrinkled and tanned by the icy blasts of the uplands.

"Here you are, Rosalindo. A peso for a candle. Get a big one, for the procession of Our Lord. He knows and I know what it's all for!"

Boundless the faith of everyone in this Christ of the Miracles, who had been living in their country since the days of the first Conquistadores! Across the ocean he had come in a floating box, without sails and without oars. He had drifted ashore in a harbour of Peru. Finally he had chosen Salta as his place of residence, and since that time the miracles he had performed numbered thousands and thousands.

But the simple Indians of the Cordillera could never allow this omnipotent divinity imported by the whites to reign alone. Other minor gods had sprung up around him. People all had great affection for the Christ of Salta; but the power they were really afraid of was the Widow of the Lantern!

The Widow of the Lantern was a witch who sometimes, when mule-drivers got lost along the mountain trails, appeared at night before them with a lantern in her hand. The man who met her must pack his kit at once for a trip to the other world. He was bound to die before the advent of a new year.

Rosalindo Ovejero counted over the errands entrusted to him before he left his house. Fourteen there were in all. Fourteen candles to be carried in the procession.

"Well," he thought, "using all my fingers, I can handle eight—four in each hand. What shall I do with the other six?" But that concern did not trouble him especially. He could find some fellow around the saloons in Salta who would carry them for the price of a



"The young ladies of Salta, in wide-brimmed hats and dressed in white, soft blues, strawberry-reds and pinks, lifted their heads boldly to acknowledge greetings from balconies and windows." (See page 27.)

drink. And gaily he set out upon his journey, mounted on a nag that, for the moment, was his entire fortune.

Rosalindo reached Salta the day of the procession. It was September, the beginning of springtime in the southern hemisphere. The streets were drenched with the perfume of flowers from the old gardens. The bells were ringing frantically from the steeples of all the churches and convents. A regiment with mounted cannon had been sent on from Buenos Aires as the Government's tribute to Our Lord of the Miracles. Processions of friars of the different orders were everywhere visible about the streets, and in the ancient Plaza de Armas.

Ovejero appeared punctually at the church. First the different images from the country towns went by with their escorts of rustic faithful. Some of these had come leagues and leagues down from the mountains. The men were walking along beside their saint, bare-headed, their spurs clattering on the pavements, their hats held in front of them in both their hands. With them were their children, gay with red and black ponchos; and their wives also, plump, shiny-skinned half-breeds, dressed in flaming colours—green, pink, or scarlet.

The young ladies of Salta, in wide-brimmed hats and dressed in white, soft blues, strawberry-reds and pinks—for this was the annual show for the new spring styles—walked two by two, under banners and standards borne by friars. Few traces of ascetic compunction featured this festival of springtime. The young ladies lifted their heads boldly to acknowledge greetings from balconies and windows, or smiled discreetly at glances from the young men gathered on the street corners.

Only in the copper-coloured, red-skinned throngs that lined the side-walks could any deep religious emotion be discerned. These simple souls were deeply affected by the clouds of incense rising from the censers, by the uniforms of the soldiers, the display of bayonets and polished steel, and finally, the wonder-working Lord himself, nailed there on the Cross, bleeding, and quite naked save for a loin-cloth of velvet.

At the end of the procession came the most interesting group, those who had been healed by their devotion to the Christ, and were eager to bear public witness to their gratitude. There were young girls—tall, slender, with ruddy cheeks and almond eyes, and wearing black mourning shawls over their swelling skirts of flaming colours; then old women with wrinkled, time-stained faces, much as the Widow of the Lantern must have been—and how they wept and wailed at sight of the bleeding body of Our Lord; and *gauchos*, also, to whom fortune had been unkind—bearded, hairy fellows, with features tanned by the sun and bitten by the frost and snow, with frayed ponchos and shoes very much the worse for wear, but inevitably with spurs—the symbol of dignity as a gentleman of the horse!

The marchers were all careful of the tiny flames flickering above their closed fists. Some of the worshippers had as many as four candles lighted in each hand. They also were fulfilling vows of absent devotees. Rosalindo, for his part, had found a friend to walk beside him and carry the six candles he could not manage himself. Don't imagine that Ovejero thought of keeping any of those pesos for himself! To be sure, he had bought candles somewhat smaller than his neighbours had expected; but that was only fair, in view of the expenses he would have in the revelry that was to follow the procession.

When the march was over, Rosalindo extinguished his fourteen tapers, and figured up just how much he could get for the unused ends. Then, in company with his helper, he began to make the rounds of the different places of amusement.

Rosalindo danced every round, watering each intermission with cup after cup of the biting *aguardiente* from Tucuman. About midnight he turned up in a house where some tall, strapping cowboys from Chaco—huge fellows with hooked noses and keen, sharp features, and a courtly manner that suggested the Arab horsemen of the legends—were the guests of honour. A harp was furnishing the music there—a delicate, melancholy, tinkling music, such as comes from an old-fashioned music-box. The spurs of the *gauchos* were clattering on the floor as they whirled round and round. The women—half-breed Indians—to escape the pursuit of their partners, were tripping gaily back and forth, their wrappers swelling out behind them from the rapid movement of the dance. In their hands they were waving the silk handkerchiefs without which it is impossible to do a good and authentic *Chileanette*.

Somehow, the soft sentimental rippling of the harp grated on Rosalindo's nerves, soured the drink he had been pouring into his body; and his irritation took the form of a sudden and implacable hatred against anybody low-down enough to have been born in Chaco.

What were those fellows doing in Salta, anyhow? Why didn't they stay where they belonged? What did they mean—coming

down to the festival of Our Lord of the Miracles, and making up to the prettiest girls in Salta? He knew very well, of course, that those women would dance with anyone, that they were as much strangers to the region as the visiting *gauchos* themselves. But when you are looking for a quarrel, any pretext will do.

It was not long before Rosalindo, loyally supported by his comrade, had his knife out, and was bravely facing the Chaco *gauchos*, who had also produced their weapons. A man fell to the floor. The women screamed. The "orchestra" gathered up his instrument under his arm and made for the door, the harp bumping against all the projections, first along the hall and then along the street. A crowd gathered outside. At last the police came, a whole squad of them.

Rosalindo, on making his escape, agreed to meet his friend as soon as they should both have slept off their wine, at a point on the outskirts of the city.

"I believe you got him, brother," the man said when they came together. And since he had some experience in such matters, he advised Rosalindo to take the road for Chili at once, unless he preferred to spend a long vacation in the penitentiary at Salta. All the dancing girls, as well as the *gauchos* present, could swear that they had seen Rosalindo give the fatal thrust. Besides, he had dropped his knife on the floor of the dance-hall in his hurry to get away.

Of course, the flight to Chili was not an easy one. You had to cross the Devil's Gorge, following a rough trail that led over the Andes to the harbour of El Paposo. Many Chilians fled to Salta by that route when they got into trouble in their own country. Why couldn't Rosalindo do as well going the other way?

"You have got to clear out, brother," the man again advised; "and I wouldn't take the El Paposo trail, after all. Ten to one they will be waiting for you on the frontier at Copiapo. They've seized your horse, so you've got to go on foot. Now I propose the other trail. It will take you a long time, but you have a chance to make your living part of the distance along the road; and, besides, when you get to Chili, you'll run right into the salt-petre district, where there is plenty of work and pay is way up high."

Rosalindo knew the trail the man was thinking of. It was called in all that region, El Camino del Despoblado—the Jailbird's Highway. It crossed the Puna de Atacama, a bleak desert where men and animals often died, sometimes of thirst, sometimes of cold, and then again ground to pieces against the rocks by the mountain gales.

Ovejero looked down at his spurs. How hard it was to lose those insignia of a cowboy, become an ordinary piker! However, he stooped and took them off.

"If you have good luck," his friend continued, "you will make Cobijo Harbour, or the Antofagasta mines, in from three weeks to a month. I know fellows who have done the trip in that time." And with the sudden burst of feeling that misfortune often inspires in the hard men of the wilds, he said, "Here, comrade, take this," and he passed over his knife and the few coins that he managed to find in different hiding-places in his clothing.

So Rosalindo Ovejero turned his back on Salta and set out along the dread "highway" to the west.

II.

He knew the road, though he had never before been over it. Every real mountaineer seems to have a feeling, a sort of intuition, for the trails of the Andes, where men and horses are so many flies crawling on the perpendicular faces of mountains that are so high they almost obliterate the sky.

All his life long Rosalindo had heard tales of danger in the Andes, and of the terrors that beset the wayfarer on the desolate plateau of Atacama. Once, in fact, when he was quite a boy he had gone as helper to some drivers, leading mules along the precipices in the bad places to be sure they would not fall off. He remembered that on those journeys, which lasted months and months, he had been afraid neither of man nor of beast. So now, if a vagabond came along and tried to rob him, didn't he have his knife? And that trusted friend would do as well for the puma of the desert uplands, fierce and hungry though that wild cat always is.

No, he was not afraid of men or of animals. What he feared most was that silent spectacle of wild nature, filled with the monstrous powers of solitude, whom his ancestors, going to and fro, had looked upon as gods. Ovejero, besides, was a religious soul, easily responsive to superstitious dreads.

He believed in the Christ of Salta; but then, there were the ancient, the native gods, as all the trail-men knew. Our Lord of the Miracles doubtless controlled the powers known to white men; but none the



"It was not long before Rosalindo, loyally supported by his comrade, had his knife out, and was bravely facing the Chaco *gauchos*." (See this page.)

The Glory of Stained Glass: "Storied Windows Richly Dight."



WITH WINDOWS LIKE JEWELS IN A SETTING:
THE INTERIOR OF CHARTRES CATHEDRAL.

From the 'Painting by Pierre Gaston Rigaud, entitled "Cathédrale de Chartres," exhibited in the Paris Salon (Société des Artistes Français), 1924.

The Glory of Stained Glass: "Storied Windows Richly Dight."



SHADOW AND SUNLIGHT: THE INTERIOR OF BOURGES CATHEDRAL.

*From the Painting by Pierre Gaston Rigaud, entitled "Cathédrale de Bourges; Ombre et Soleil,"
Exhibited in the Paris Salon (Société des Artistes Français), 1924.*

less, was not Pacha-Mama as much the mistress of the Cordillera and its dependent valleys as she had ever been in the centuries before the Spaniards came?

Pacha-Mama is a kindly, beneficent goddess, who is present everywhere and knows everything, so that a fellow cannot conceal a word or a thought from her. She is Mother Earth herself; and any trail-man with a spark of God-fearing decency in him lets a drop of water fall on the ground every time he drinks, so that the good old lady may quench her thirst. And when he starts chewing coca, doesn't he kick up a piece of turf with his shoes and bury a leaf so that she may share his pleasure? Give Pacha-Mama plenty to eat and drink, and she will do no harm to you or to your children.

Rosalindo knew that Pacha-Mama didn't live alone. She had a husband, Tata-Coquena, a good-natured fellow also, though a trifle hen-pecked—something like the king-consort in the countries where a woman may wear the crown.

Pacha-Mama and Tata-Coquena in their lifetime had been drivers along the trails. What other profession would anyone choose if he were rich enough to be able to choose? When the two gods went across the mountains they drove great herds of llamas, as big as elephants, along with them, and the boxes in their packs were filled with coca—a substance more precious to muleteers of the Andes than gold itself. Nothing that the country produces can compare with these dry, refreshing leaves, so rich in the magical cocaine.

As Rosalindo reached the trail to the hills, Pacha-Mama and the Christ of Salta were both present in his mind. His mixture of Indian and Spanish blood justified him in expecting help from both these divinities. If one of them failed, the other one would come to the rescue, just to spite the rival god.

The most solitary regions of the Cordillera that he had ever known seemed like paradise itself in comparison with the desert he was now traversing. Only a stunted vegetation could cling here and there to the shelter of some rock. Occasionally he would pass a pile of slag around some exhausted mine, or the ruin of an ancient village with its church—traces of the old Spanish settlers who had penetrated those uninhabitable regions in search of the precious gold.

The solitude became more and more desolate, more and more terrifying, as Rosalindo advanced. Everything was dry, parched, forbidding. Save for the snow-laden cyclones that swept the plateau in the winter months and buried every traveller they caught, there was never any water there. The mineral riches of the soil gave the mountains fantastic colours. Here was a peak of brilliant green, there a chain of red, and there a ridge of orange. At the bottom of a basin he would see a thick white crust where a lake of borax had petrified. Days and days went by without his seeing a real tree. From time to time he would come to a sheltered gully with cactus plants, tall and stiff as columns.

In the first days, Rosalindo had met an occasional herder keeping flocks of goats alive, in some miraculous way, on that sterile plain. After that he met no one. Absolute solitude surrounded him—the silence of a land of death, a monstrous depth of nothingness, an absence of all life, a vacuum that seemed to open before him as he stepped forward and close behind him when he had passed.

One by one he identified all the landmarks that the men who had been over the trail and the shepherds whom he had met along the border of the desert had described to him.

None of these people on receiving him into their cabins had questioned him about his business. They understood that he had "reasons" for coming that way, and, since things can happen to almost any man of courage, they merely gave him advice as to the route he should follow—and a side of goat meat, usually, to keep him from starving on the road.

At last Rosalindo's food gave out; but he did not lose heart on that account. He had a pouch hanging from his belt, and as long as that was there he need not fear. A leaf of the marvellous coca from time to time filled his muscles with energy and his soul with joy. Every evening he would seek shelter in the lee of a rock or in one of the ruined buildings that he found occasionally along the trail; and every morning at dawn he would set out on his way again, going from one landmark to the next, carefully studying the trail so as not to lose his way in that monotonous desert.

What he feared most was the chance of one of those terrible glacial winds that sweep the Puna. On that lofty plateau the blast of the hurricane is fully as destructive as the snow itself. But so long as the sky continued clear Rosalindo felt himself quite safe.

To be sure, any ordinary person, on going higher and higher, would find it harder and harder to breathe, for the Andean altitudes are a great torment to the person unused to them. But Ovejero was a true mountaineer. He was not subject to what was called "Puna-sickness." At ten thousand feet above the sea he breathed as easily as on the plains.

"I must be getting near the Widow's Tomb," he said to himself one morning, judging from signs along the trail that he was reaching the end of the up grade. "A couple of days more and I will begin to go down hill."

Rosalindo, like all the children of the land of Salta, knew all about the Widow's Tomb, where *la difunta Correa* was buried. The widow was a poor woman who, like Rosalindo, had plunged out on foot across that desert, but with a suckling child in her arms. Her idea had been to get to Chili to find a man of hers, a new husband or a lover who had deserted her and her child. The icy gales of the Puna had caught her at the very top of the plateau, and she and her baby, taking refuge behind a big stone, had succumbed to cold and hunger. Months later, some trailmen going that way had found them sleeping, it seemed, as naturally as if they had gone to bed an hour before. The cold and the dryness of the uplands had preserved their bodies.

The devout mountaineers had dug a grave in the sterile soil and heaped up a pile of stones above the resting-place of *la difunta Correa* and her child. That had been the most pitiful and affecting of the tragedies of the terrible "highway." From year to year the pile of stones grew taller, and eventually it became a landmark to all those passing that way. Every traveller thought himself obliged to say a prayer for the dead woman over her sepulchre and to leave an offering. A hermit from a shrine farther on down the trail appointed himself executor of the dead woman's "earnings." Every six months or so he came up to the tomb, collected the money left there, and paid for masses for the unfortunate widow's soul.



"That dry, withered, mouldy arm that seemed to stretch out endlessly into the darkness in front of him went on ahead, holding out the murky lantern that seemed to waver back and forth as she walked." (See page 35.)

The offerings were never troubled. A superstitious rectitude came over the trailmen at sight of them. For months and months the money would lie there untouched, though not a few of the wayfarers following that trail were men of unsavoury reputations. On the contrary, every bandit, no matter how great a criminal he may have been, left something for the old woman as a security for the success of his own journey.

Finally, Rosalindo reached the tomb. Two black boards nailed one across the other formed a cross over the pile of stones. At the foot of the heap was an old tin can that had contained American corned beef. The label of a Chicago firm was slowly fading there in the weather. The can was weighted at the bottom by a stone to keep the wind from blowing it away.

Ovejero looked into the can and lifted up the stone. His eyes fell on a number of peso bills and several nickel coins. It had been a long time, apparently, since the hermit had made his last call. The *gaucho* knew what his duty was. He took off his hat and knelt beside the cross.

"Poor woman," he murmured. "*Pobre difunta Correa.*" And he repeated all the prayers that he remembered.

Then he felt inside his belt, pulled out the various objects there, and at last came to the knotted handkerchief in which he kept his money. He loosened the knot and spread out on the ground his entire possessions. He had just three pesos and a few coppers left. It would be hard for him to make much of an offering from that. His expenses had been very heavy back there on the eastern edge of the desert. Anxiously he thought of what might be in store for him on the western side when he would find himself again among men. He would need money to live on while he was finding work, and all he had was hardly enough for that.

Sitting on the ground there, he went deeper and deeper into his calculations. "A dollar and a-half, and a few cents more. About how long will that last?"

Suddenly he started. A strange sound, an unexpected presence, brought him back to realities. He was not alone in the desert. As he looked up he saw, on the other side of the pile of stones, an enormous animal in a golden skin flecked with spots of darkish red. It looked like a big dog, but it had a cat's head, a long bristly moustache, and green eyes that seemed to flash with sparks of golden fire.

But Rosalindo was not afraid. He knew that brute. It was a puma, a wild-cat of the Andes, wavering between fear and courage, not able to decide whether to attack or to run away. Rosalindo picked up a stone, and raising a wild yell, threw it at the puma. The stone caught the animal on the foot. The wild-cat made off, but stopped a short distance away and looked back. This was his kingdom, without doubt! All the year round he loitered about the tomb, the most frequent stop in the whole desert. There was often the leaving of a meal to feed on, and the chances, perhaps, of catching a man or a mule off guard.

Rosalindo decided not to persist in his offensive. He thought of the puma as a sort of guardian of the tomb, and it occurred to him that perhaps in that feline of the Andes part of the widow's soul might still be living reincarnate.

He went back to his calculations. "A dollar and a-half. I won't get far on that!" He looked into the tin can again. An idea had just occurred to him. He was alive and he was hard up. The widow had been dead for years and years. She couldn't be in what you would call a hurry for money. Besides, she didn't have that terrible trip to Chili to think of. Masses? Yes! But it might be months and months before the hermit came again to collect those offerings.

Couldn't he strike a bargain with the widow, touch her for a loan? Rosalindo never dreamed, you understand, of stealing the money, which, as property of the dead, had a sacred character in his eyes, and represented so many masses for the eternal salvation of that mother and her child. Nevertheless, what was the harm in borrowing the money—with good interest, of course? What was there wrong in an arrangement like that? There were plenty of precedents. Tradesmen across the Andes had often used alms in just that way, borrowing from the graves of unfortunates along the trails on solemn promise to return greater sums.

He counted over the money in the can. Eight pesos and forty centavos—four dollars and twenty cents. He rummaged around under his belt again and brought out the stub of a pencil and a piece of old newspaper from Salta that he had been using for a wrapper.

The composition of the note was a long and difficult task. However, he indited a declaration to the effect that he was borrowing four dollars and twenty cents from the Widow Correa, deceased, promising to return it to the foot of the cross within a year. To make his promise more solemn and impressive, he put two or three capitals in each word. Then he signed it—ROSALINDO OVEJERO—with big letters that took up all the space still left on the crumpled paper. He transferred the money from the can to his belt, put the receipt into the can, and laid the stone back exactly as he had found it, so that the wind should not blow it away.

The puma had come back to the other side of the pile of stones, whining with hypocritical pathos, but really hoping to find the man with his back turned. Rosalindo tossed another stone in the animal's direction, but not so as to hurt him. Now he was more than ever convinced that the puma was the protector of the widow's grave.

Lighter of heart, he continued on his way.

A week after leaving the Widow's Tomb the fugitive came to a camp inhabited by human beings, then later to a cross trail, leading in one direction up to Bolivia, and in the other down to the shores of the Pacific.

III.

Rosalindo Ovejero worked for some months in the mines along the coast, part of the time in Antofagasta, then again at Iquique, and as far north as Arica, on the frontier of Peru. The work was not very hard, and a fellow got whopping wages.

Rosalindo came to regard that little episode in Salta as a divine intervention in his behalf. Why in the world had he ever stuck to mule-driving so long? Why, he earned more in two weeks in Chili than he made in a year at home! Besides, living was better. The climate was pleasanter in this land of exile. What a good time a fellow could have! Liquor flowed like water in the cafés and saloons. Money never seemed to give out in that land of joy and good fellowship.

What fun it was to go into a store where bottles stretched out in long lines on the shelves! And you could pick them off one by one with your revolver, if you were willing to pay for them! It was something to be able to waste money like that. It sort of made you feel much more of a man!

One day, some eight months after Rosalindo had reached the mines, he ran across an old acquaintance from Salta. This man had also been working on the coast, but he had not had such good luck as Ovejero.

Now he had decided to clear out—leave his debts and quarrels behind him.

The thought of this old townsman going back over the Atacama trail suddenly reminded Rosalindo of his debt to the widow. So, one night while he was treating his comrade to a drink in a saloon in Antofagasta, he brought the matter up.

"You are going back by the Atacama trail, aren't you, brother? Now see here, will you do a favour for me? When you get to the Widow's Tomb, I wish you would leave thirty pesos in the tin can there. She gave me eight-forty, but a fellow has got to be decent to those who do him favours. Besides, I imagine the old woman is in need of a few masses. You had better stop at the hermitage on the way up and see whether the hermit is holding my receipt. Of course, if he hasn't been up there it will still be in the can. In that case, take it out when you leave the money. You have to do such things in a business-like way, especially where the dead are concerned. Send the receipt to me by mail. And here is a peso or two extra for your trouble."

The months went by. Rosalindo worked hard and never missed a day at the mines. Though he had always been handy with the knife at home, he was settling down now and avoiding quarrels. Let him enjoy his bottle of a Sunday in peace. That was all he asked for.

Eventually he fell sick. The doctor, a young fellow from Santiago, thought it was a case of too much alcohol, but Rosalindo knew better than that stuck-up Chilean what the real cause of his trouble was.

You see, he had not been sleeping well, and he was having such terrible dreams. One day, as he was staggering home from the saloon, what did he see? A woman, sir, a woman, coming towards him—a woman in a faded shawl, lean, just skin and bones, with a darkish sort of complexion and big black eyes flashing fire! At her side was a little boy who scarcely came up to her knees. Rosalindo did not know the Widow Correa, of course, nor had he met anyone who had ever seen her. But it was the Widow Correa all right; he was sure of that!

He took off his hat, as reverently as he had done while praying on her tomb.

"What can I do for you, señora?" he asked politely. "What do you want of me?" The woman had said nothing, but merely looked and looked at him, sharply, sternly. As he went into his house, he closed the door behind him, but the woman followed, and the child with her, filtering right in through the boards.

Rosalindo slept in a big room with seven other men, but the woman didn't seem to mind those fellows. She kept right on and on, and finally stopped at the foot of Ovejero's bed. Whenever he opened his eyes, there she stood—stiff, straight, motionless, looking down upon him with those flaming, staring eyes of hers that never seemed to wink.

The morning after this encounter, the cowboy thought he had divined the meaning of this visit. Doubtless the poor widow had come to thank him for the four hundred per cent. interest he had given her on her loan. If she had had that terrible expression on her face, it was probably because spirits in the other world can't look any other way.

He was not much surprised when he met her the following night on his way home from the saloon. Again he took off his hat and addressed her in the halting, stammering voice of a drunkard.

"Don't mention it, señora, don't mention it. You have nothing to thank me for. A man's word is his word. I am sorry I couldn't make it more. Next year, perhaps, if another friend goes that way, I will remember you again."

But the woman didn't seem to hear him. She continued staring at him fixedly, while the pale face of her child seemed to convulse with weeping, though there was no sound and no sign of tears.

So it went on night after night. Rosalindo drank more and more, hoping thus to get rid of the frightful visions. But the pursuit of the widow became more insistent as his drunkenness increased. She was now following him around by daylight, standing at his elbow as he worked with pick and shovel in the mines.

"There is something in this business that I don't understand," Rosalindo began to think. "Do you suppose that fellow didn't deliver the money I gave him?"

He began to ask around about this friend of his.

At last a miner who had been going up and down the coast, from saloon to saloon, gambling and swindling the working men, gave him news of his friend from Salta. The fellow had been killed in a saloon brawl in a village at the foot of the Andes as he was going up from Cobija to take the Atacama trail.

The poor cowboy, who never dreamed that his money had failed to reach the widow, was quite dumbfounded on receiving this piece of news. Painfully he calculated the number of days that had passed since he left his receipt in the tin can at the foot of the cross. Then a smile of satisfaction came over his face, as though he had solved a difficult problem. More than a year! The note was overdue. The widow had a right to complain.

Now he understood why she had eyed him so severely and why the little child kept weeping all the time. They were hungry—hungry for masses in their life in the other world. And there he was, wasting his



THE INSPIRATION.

By PHILIP A. de LASZLO, H.R.B.A., R.S.P.P.

This picture was exhibited at the French Gallery, 1924, under the title of "The Drawing Lesson," and is published by the Artist's kind permission.

wages in drinking and good times, while those poor souls were being held in Purgatory because he had neglected to repay money that he owed.

He could hardly wait for nightfall. When the widow appeared again he would explain the whole business; and, to keep his head clear for the interview, he did not drink at all that day. But for some reason the widow did not appear. Not till early in the morning, when Ovejero was waking from a sound sleep, did he see her again, for a second, while he was rubbing his eyes.

"You see, señora," he explained, "it was not my fault. A friend of mine just got himself killed and lost all my money. However, I'll pay—I'll pay! I am going to find someone to take the cash to you even if I have to foot all the expenses for the trip myself. And I'll increase the interest too."

He did not need to explain further. The widow with her child disappeared as though these promises had eased her mind—or she may have been frightened by the yelling and swearing that started among the other boarders in the room when they were awakened by the loud voice in which Rosalindo talked. They were getting tired of the fellow, they were. Every night now he was coming home drunk, and talking out loud for hours at a time with that invisible woman.

For a long time Rosalindo had no further encounter with his creditor in the other world. And this absence seemed quite natural to him. People over there know what living souls are doing here. She understood how this matter of the loan was on the cowboy's mind. And, indeed, he was drinking much less than usual, and working overtime when there was a chance. Meanwhile, he was looking around for someone to make the trip to the Widow's Tomb and deposit the money at the foot of the cross. Unfortunately, no one seemed to be going east on the Atacama trail, though he made inquiries everywhere.

"It's no use!" he thought. "I have got to hire a man. It will cost a heap of money, but never mind. I have got to get a good night's sleep pretty soon, without that poor widow and her baby coming to wake me up all the time."

At last Ovejero found his man, an old Chilean, "Señor Juanito" by name—"No Juanito," as the Chileans said, for Chileans are inclined to treat words of respect somewhat disrespectfully. Rosalindo had always had a world of regard for "No Juanito." The cowboy never dared to open his mouth when the venerable old Chilean was speaking. His admiration for the sage was so great that when Juanito explained that he had never been across the Atacama trail and didn't know where the tomb of the widow was, Rosalindo paid no particular attention. A few directions to a man like that and you could rely on him to go to the end of the world.

"The Atacama trail! The Puna? Huh! Easy as pie!" the old man said. "Just tell me where the place is, and I'll go there in a bee line. This ain't the first nor the tenth time I have been across the Andes, but I always went before in the winter time when the trails were all covered with snow and a mountain goat couldn't have got across the glaciers!"

Juanito listened impatiently when Rosalindo started a long and detailed explanation.

"I don't need all that," he interrupted. "I can find the road. From what you have said already, I could go there blindfolded. But just a moment, *cuyano*. . . . How much do you think you will send the old lady?"

The *gaucho* figured out carefully what the trip was going to cost. Then he decided he would try thirty pesos again. But Juanito protested.

"Oh, no," he said; "that isn't enough. Just think a minute. The money was due months ago. Think what that poor woman must have been suffering in Purgatory just because she didn't get your money in time! See here, *cuyano*, make it fifty at least!"

Yes and no, no and yes—the cowboy finally made it fifty. The figure would eat into his savings; but, after all, he would be square at last with *la difunta Correa*! It was not so easy to come to an agreement with Juanito on the matter of expenses.

"No, sir—no, sir! I don't stir away from here for less than a hundred. You see, I am getting old, and I like the place. I intend to die right here, and I don't risk a trip like that unless you pay me, and pay me well. Besides, see what I lose if I go away." And he reeled off a list of all the *pulparias*, all the *remoliendas*—all the "joints" and "holes"—where he played the guitar and sang *cuecas* at nights, seasoning intermissions with obscene stories.

"Why, I am in demand around here. Everybody wants 'No Juanito' to lead the dances. Even at a hundred I'll be losing money. But I like you, *cuyano*, and a dog would do a favour for a friend." Vanquished in the bargaining at last, the cowboy agreed; and he worked and worked for a long time, for one hundred and fifty was more than he had on hand.

But one day he came around to Juanito's and passed over a bag of money.

"Good!" said the old man. "I'll leave to-morrow morning, and make straight for the top of the Puna. I'll be back inside a month and give you the receipt."

IV.

Rosalindo Ovejero had not slept so soundly for some months past. He was working hard to replenish his little fund of savings. Every now and then he would stagger home from the tavern, but for a month his fellow-boarders had not been awakened by his monologues with the invisible woman.

Four weeks, five weeks, six weeks went by; Juanito had not returned. But Rosalindo was not alarmed on that account. Everybody knew that the old Chilean was always moving from place to place. It was just like him to go on across the desert to Salta, where a man like him would make a fortune in the gaming-places and dance-halls.

But after eight weeks—and still no letter from his messenger—Rosalindo began to worry. The woman and her child had again appeared, her eyes rounder and more fiery than ever, her face leaner and more parched, it seemed, by the long roasting in Purgatory. And that child, that boy!

"What's the matter, señora, what's the matter? I sent you your money! I sent you your money! Didn't you get it? Didn't you see 'No Juanito'?"

"Shut up, you damned *cuyano*!" was the only thing he heard in answer. "What's the matter with you, anyhow? Guess you must have killed a woman before you came over here across the Andes."

The next day Rosalindo was so broken up he could not go to work.

"There is something under this that I don't understand," he said. "Do you suppose they killed Juanito the way they did the other fellow?"

He simply had to have news. He walked into Antofagasta, where the old Chilean had so many friends. It did not take Rosalindo long to find out from those people that Juanito was not dead—that he had never been in better health, in fact. When the *cuyano* told about his arrangement for the trip up the Atacama trail, the men just laughed at him. Juanito was not the man for things like that. He didn't like cold weather! He had shipped at once on a Chilean

steamer and made various stops along the Pacific. He had last been heard of in Valparaíso, where he was singing and playing in the water front dives. Rosalindo was sorry Valparaíso was not within walking distance. Nothing would have pleased him better than to drop in on one of those song-feasts of the old man and settle the whole argument with his knife then and there. So that hundred and fifty had just been thrown away, and the widow would again be calling on him night after night, drinking the life-blood out of him and leaving him so weak and miserable he couldn't do a good day's work.

Rosalindo was right. The widow did come back. Again she began to wait for him every night along the road between the tavern and his boarding-house. Again she followed him through the door, which the *gaucho* now slammed in her very face.

"What's the use?" he said at last, desperately. "I have got to go myself, though I feel so bad. There's no other way out of it. I've got to go."

However, he did not leave for some time. For one thing, he was not feeling well; and then again, wages had been going up, and when he worked he made a lot of money. Rosalindo, in fact, stopped drinking for a time after that rise of pay. The widow let him alone for a few nights, and he began to hope it might be all right, after all.

One night, sitting up in his bed, he was thinking of the absence of the spectre and wondering if she would ever come again. "I'll bet she does," he thought. "I'll bet she does." And he looked around over the room, which was resonant with the snores and fragrant with the alcoholic breathing of his seven fellow-roomers. The darkness seemed to fill him with a terror greater than he had ever experienced before. He felt in his bones that something extraordinary was going to happen, something more mysterious, more awful than usual.



"A pair of hands had reached down out of the darkness and seized him by the feet, pulling at them till it seemed his bones would part at the joints." (See page 35.)

But nothing happened till the following night. Then at the place where he usually met *la difunta Correa*, the spectre appeared, but she was not wrapped as usual in a black shawl, nor did she have a child at her side. She came forward out of the darkness alone, and stopped in front of him. From behind her back she drew an arm with a lantern hanging in its hand.

Rosalindo knew who she was, though he had never seen her before. It was the Widow of the Lantern, but at the same time it was *la difunta Correa*! That dry, withered, mouldy arm that seemed to stretch out endlessly into the darkness in front of him went on ahead, holding out the murky lantern that seemed to waver back and forth as she walked. Drawn on by a resistless force, the cowboy hurried towards his lodgings with the light dancing before his eyes and illuminating with a ghastly, blood-red brightness the black robes of the spectre. On reaching his house he hurriedly closed the door behind him, but the Widow of the Lantern came in through the boards. He threw himself full length on his bed; but the lantern hung suspended at the foot of the cot, and behind it, in the dim light, shone the face of the dread widow, not blank, pale, severe, as formerly, but cruel, leering, the corners of the ghastly mouth drawn up into a smile of malignant joy.

"I'll pay—oh, I'll pay!" he shouted. "It's not my fault. But, for God's sake, put that lantern out!"

He threw up his job and got ready for the journey. The season was not quite right for a crossing of the Cordillera up to the top of the Atacama trail. Winter was coming on. Friends did all they could to dissuade him, but Rosalindo gloomily shook his head. They didn't understand why he simply had to go. The Widow of the Lantern was an implacable foe. Her appearance meant that he must die inevitably within a year. But, after all, it was the question of the money. Perhaps, if he paid it at once, the ultimatum would be cancelled. What reason would she have to punish him once he had fulfilled his obligations?

One night the cry he gave was the cry of a man in absolute terror. It aroused everyone in the house. Rosalindo had not seen anybody, but a pair of hands had reached down out of the darkness and seized him by the feet, pulling at them till it seemed his bones would part at the joints. The men in the room gathered around his bed and held him down; but the invisible hands kept pulling and pulling, while he screamed aloud with pain and fright.

There was no question about his starting now. He would have to make the journey not only to get a night's sleep back again, but to free himself from a most horrible death. In his days of prosperity he had hardly known how to spend all the money he made. But now he was poor. To get the needed funds together, he sold out all the little things he had bought. He recovered a number of loans that he had made to friends and which he had never thought of collecting before. With the combined proceeds he bought an old, broken-down mule that had been discarded from the mines, and he laid in a stock of provisions.

The tavern-keepers along the road through the foothills of the Andes saw him pass on that rickety but still courageous animal up toward the Atacama trail. In vain they urged the *gaucho* to turn back. Winter had broken in the uplands. The last trailmen to come down had declared the Puna impassable to anyone who should follow them. But Rosalindo pushed on.

Far up on the western slope of the Andes he met one last driver, a Bolivian in a red poncho and a fur cap, coming down to the coast with a train of llamas, each with two bags across its back.

"Don't go on," the Indian advised. "It's blowing like hell up there. Take my advice. Come back with me. No living man can get through there. The devil is the boss of this trail for the next six months."

But Ovejero needed to have a talk with that devil—come to an understanding about certain things, so that he would not be troubled with bad dreams any more. He reached the eastern edge of the forest land. The terrible Puna, without trees, without water, stretched away uphill ahead of him. He plucked up courage as he compared his present journey with the trip he had taken two years before. Now he was not alone. His mule had supplies for a whole month. When he got tired he could ride on the animal's back, and thus make longer marches of it than he had done before. But on the previous crossing, on the other hand, though he had no food he had plenty of coca with him, and he had not been hungry. Life on the coast had not agreed with him, after all. He was a bit broken-down. He felt tired, older.

The cold winds of the high plateau began to blow, fanned by the wings of that devil, the Lord of the Desert, of whom the Bolivian muleteer had told him. Sometimes the gale was so strong that his mule could make no headway; but the cowboy urged the animal on, pricking him with the point of a knife till he broke into a run again.

"Geddap, geddap!" Rosalindo pushed on, his whole soul bent on reaching the Widow's Tomb as soon as possible.

He cut out the meal in the middle of the day. He was not very hungry, and it took time to stop and eat. He camped at sundown every day for fear of losing his way in

the dark, but he was on the trail again in the first twilight of dawn. When the mule seemed to be wearing out, he began to feed it with his own bread. Let the brute eat everything. The important thing was to get there. But one afternoon, when Rosalindo judged he must be getting near the tomb, the animal collapsed and stretched out on the ground. It was useless to whip him or encourage him. Rosalindo understood that the poor animal was done for. However, he hurried on. He would stop on the way back the next day and get the provisions that were left. He must reach the Widow's Tomb that evening.

Walking on alone now, without the protection afforded by the mule's body, he found himself enveloped by the whirlwinds that were sweeping over the desert immensity, driving clouds of sand before them that cut into his face and hands. Sometimes he had to lie down on the ground to escape the violence of the blasts. Once, while clinging to a rock with

his hands, the wind swept his feet off the ground, and there he hung suspended in the air. When the wind was

strongest he crawled forward on hands and knees, so fixed was his determination to get on. Then again, the gale would slacken for a time and he could walk upright, identifying, meanwhile, various landmarks along the trail.

He was getting nearer and nearer the end of his journey. Fortunately, he had some strength to go on. But the cold of the uplands was eating into his bones. His arms were now hanging limp at his sides. His breath had frozen into icicles on his moustache and beard. All the warmth of his body seemed to have run into his head and legs.

At last a pile of stones came into view—something like the ruins of an old stone cabin. Beyond it was a great pile of rocks and two boards crossed on top of it. He had just reached that crude sepulchre of the desert when the hurricane broke anew. But the cowboy seemed indifferent to the cruelties of the storm.

All his attention was fixed on the pile of stones. At the foot of the cross was the same tin can, and in it the same stone to hold it down. Nothing had changed since two years before. The can may have been a bit more rusty.

"At last!" he murmured to himself. "At last!"

How glad he was to have arrived—at last! He started to take off his hat to say his prayer to the dead woman. But he failed. He could not lift his arms. They hung lifeless from his shoulders as though they were no longer a part of his body.

"Well, I'll have to keep my hat on," he thought.

He tried to utter a prayer, but not a sound could leave his mouth.

"Well, I can think a prayer. The widow will surely hear me."

"Here I am, señora," he said mentally. "I have been slow, but it was not my fault, as you and your little boy well know. I am bringing back the money with the interest that I promised. Forty pesos in all—the best that I could do. That is all I could get together!"

He tried to produce the money from his belt, show it to the widow before depositing it under the stone where he had left his receipt. But again he could not lift his arms. Desperately he struggled, but the paralysis seemed to be creeping all over him. Even his legs were beginning to give way.

A voice kept saying within him: "Don't give up! Don't lie down!" But his knees gradually folded under him.

He sank to the ground. How sleepy he felt! How good it seemed to be able to rest a moment! At the same time, he was anxious to get his account straightened out without delay.

"Here is your money. I tell you, señora, it was not my fault. The men I sent to bring it to you tricked me. Why don't you take it? Why don't you listen to me?"

Someone, however, was listening. A living form had suddenly risen from among the stones in the tombs and was creeping slowly towards him. The approach of the strange form did not impress Rosalindo as anything extraordinary. He, too, was lying full length at that moment on the ground. He could not lift his head to see exactly who it was, but he could guess. The widow probably was sorry to see him lying helpless there. She was coming to take the money from his belt. Perhaps she was bringing the Widow of the Lantern too, to show her that everything was all right.

He heard a gruff, harsh, panting sound close to his ears. A feeling of mortal terror came over him. Those two spectres! How horrible! Perhaps the vampires were coming to suck his blood, to get strength enough for their future apparitions!

A dark, lean form rose between his eyes and the failing light of the wintry afternoon. Two huge, round, fiery eyes were looking into his, penetrating, it seemed, to the very bottom of his soul. He thought of the fixed, flashing eyes of the dead widow. Those before him were just as fiery, but they were not black. They were green with sparks of gold.

A mighty snarl sounded in his ears, as though the whole desert were in

travail. A huge, foamy chasm, purple on the inside and bristling with marble cones, opened before him two columns hard as stone fell upon his breast and crushed his body against the ground, holding him so tight that he could not move.

"Here, señora, take your money. . . . I came all the way myself. . . . It's forty . . . and you lent me eight. . . ."



"Far up on the western slope of the Andes he met one last driver, a Bolivian in a red poncho and a fur cap, coming down to the coast with a train of llamas."

[SEE THIS PAGE.]



WARWICK

REYNOLDS

TOWN BIRDS.

FROM THE PAINTING BY S. S. LONGLEY, A.R.B.A., SHOWN AT THE SPRING EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, 1924.



"My Lady of St. James's": An Idyll of the Park.



How to make A MERRY XMAS.

Take one Xmas Pudding, pour over some Bird's Custard, piping hot. Take all your laughing boys and girls and give them spoons of size to match. Serve each with pudding, adding generous helpings of hot Custard sauce. Watch for five minutes the smiles of real enjoyment. Then clear away the empty plates!

Bird's Custard

adds to the enjoyment of all the festive fare at Christmas. Unlike cream, Bird's never disagrees but aids the digestion of the Pudding, Mince Pies and Fruit.

Helpful Hints for Xmas Parties.

Serve Bird's Custard Hot as a Sauce and it makes a golden crown for the pudding. Bird's Custard makes the most delectable Trifle—always a firm favorite at Christmas.

Well-whisk Bird's Custard when it is cold and set. It then goes like Summer Cream with Mince Pies, etc., and replaces clotted cream in Tartlets, Cream Horns, etc., etc.

Tins, 1/6 ; silvered boxes, 1/1 & 6½d. ; small tricolour pkts. 1½d.

OUR VERY BEST PEOPLE

A Story of Twin Sisters

By EDNA FERBER

Illustrated by
J. DEWAR MILLS



Something came creeping back into Hannah's consciousness like the fragments of a tune once heard and long forgotten. (See page 49.)

IF Rutger G. Tune had waited two weeks longer to die, he would have had to do a lot of explaining. And he had always hated explanations. They bored him. He died as he had lived, soldier of fortune that he was, with his spats on. Not only that, they were fawn spats, setting off a grey morning suit further enhanced by a flower in the buttonhole. There were few other—if any—fawn spats, grey morning suits, or bellowed buttonholes in Kansas City, Missouri, twenty years ago.

A plump, high-coloured, well-dressed figure of a middle-aged man, he had just passed debonairly through the gates of the Kansas City Union Station on his way to take the east-bound train, a deferential dusky porter ahead of him, when suddenly he crumpled, sank, and became a mere heap of haberdashery on the station platform. Confusion, crowds, telegrams. And the Tune twins, already motherless, were summoned home from their commencement exercises at Vassar to find themselves pretty much in the position of the two orphans of drama fame, so far as finances and future were concerned.

One week after the funeral: "But what did he do with it?" demanded Hilda Tune, the beauty. Her tone was perhaps excusably querulous, considering that she and her sister Hannah now found themselves possessed of exactly nine hundred and twenty dollars each, the lawyers having just finished explaining.

"He didn't have it," replied Hannah, the plain twin, composedly.

"Didn't have it? What nonsense, Hannah. What did we live on all these years? Our education and clothes, and this huge house, and father's wine and food and horses, and——" Her voice trailed off. Then again, in helpless wrath: "What did we live on?"

"Bluff," said Hannah.

Even then, stricken though she was, Hilda had the good taste to be offended. "I wish you wouldn't use words like that, Hannah. And I do wish you wouldn't be any more vulgar than you can help."

Hannah was good-humoured enough about it, as always. "I'm not being a bit more vulgar than I can help. Besides, it's in the dictionary. Let's not quarrel now, Hilda. I don't think father has had much money, really, in the last few years. I think he must have been worrying for quite a while about how he was going to explain things. He'd have had to explain in another week or two. And he knew it couldn't be done."

"But mother left heaps. And there was all that stock in the packing company."

"Yes, but father squandered heaps. The stock must have gone years ago."

"But it was ours! Lots of it was ours! Yours and mine."

Hannah smiled grimly. "You must have understood something of what Mr. Patterson and that other lawyer meant when they said that father had been unwise in his handling of the money. He gambled, among other things. So the money went, and the stocks went, and this house is mortgaged right up to the shingles. Father died owing practically everybody in Kansas City, from the First National Bank to the boy who delivers the evening paper. We haven't any real right to this precious nine hundred and twenty dollars they've bestowed on us. . . . Well, if we've learned anything practical at school, Hilda, my gal, now's a grand chance to prove it."

An Eastern finishing school, followed by Vassar, had rarely turned out a more unfinished product than Hannah Tune, who was, she would explain to you, the elder of the Tune twins. Hannah resembled her simple, straightforward, plain-featured mother, who had been the Kansas City heiress of the stock-yards stock. Hilda was undeniably her father's daughter—authentic offspring of Rutger G. Tune, of the Massachusetts Tunes, who were born to be ancestors as some people are born singers, writers, drunkards. A true Tune could pose for a casual snapshot and emerge looking like a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Rutger G. Tune, having bestowed upon the plain Kansas City heiress his name, the charm of his occasional company, and the twin daughters,

had considered his obligations obliterated, and had set about enjoying what there was to enjoy in this mid-western town to which he had come.

Kansas City, though it sniggered at his lemon-coloured spider phaeton, with its two smart trotters and the flunkey seated up behind, really felt a thrill of pride in the picture it all made as Tune, perched high on the fawn-cushioned box, in his cream covert coat, his whip held at an angle of ninety, his hat just a little on one side, clipped briskly down Gilham Boulevard and whirled into the Paseo at an hour when the rest of Kansas City's adult male population was turning nickles into mickles as fast as it could. He practically represented the city's masculine leisured class.

From his lofty vantage he would greet the townspeople with that specious air of democracy peculiar to the born snob. "H're you, Lindsey! . . . Morning, Mrs. Horner!" His fine colour high, his full lips smiling.

"Get on to the hat!" giggled Kansas City, nudging its neighbour. "He's fixed up like one of those dining-room pictures—you know. English prints, they call 'em." Nevertheless, the town felt a vicarious thrill when a Tune horse won an Eastern race. The racing sheet would read: "Twin Girls. Rutger G. Tune, Owner." His favourite racing horse, bought at about the time of their birth, had been named in compliment to Hilda and Hannah.

It had been part of his snobbishness that he had sent the girls to Eastern schools in their early 'teens. Also, when the Tunes travelled, it was always in the East or in Europe. They knew practically nothing of the vast country that stretched for thousands of miles west of Missouri to the Pacific. Mrs. Tune had loved her Middle West; had refused to live in the East, though her husband had urged it throughout her lifetime; and she had, during that lifetime, and even after, shrewdly made it financially difficult for her handsome husband to remain long away from the city whence her income had its source. The twins had once been taken to see the Colorado Rockies briefly, and somewhat remotely, at Colorado Springs. Western railroad society was largely represented at the Antlers Hotel. Rutger G. Tune had not liked it.

"A lot of brakemen," he said, "who have worked their way up through promotion to superintendencies, and their wives who have been waitresses, probably, in the Harvey station eating-houses."

Mrs. Tune, though plain, had been a woman of spirit. She had spoken up at this. "My father used to say that those Western railroad brakemen and Harvey lunch-room waitresses were the future aristocracy of the West. Fine stock, he used to say, for foundation material. 'Pick out,' he said, 'almost any well-dressed, intelligent, prosperous-looking woman who was the wife of a successful ranch-owner, Santa Fé railroad official, mining or oil man living within one thousand miles of the Mojave Desert, and ask her if she was born in the West. She'd answer: "Oh, no! I'm from Iowa"—or maybe Wisconsin, or Michigan, or Kansas, or even Ohio—"I used to be a Harvey girl." Pa always said they were a fine lot, those Harvey waitresses. Smart, independent. Had come West because they wanted to see the country, probably, and were tired of some kind of tyranny in the East. Pioneer stuff, Pa said. I used to like to hear him when he said that New England had its Lowells and Cabots and Lodges, and the South its Van Revels and Colonel Carters and its F. F. V.s; but that out in Arizona and Texas and Colorado and New Mexico it was the children of the ranchers and railroad men and the ex-Harvey girls who would form the future backbone of——"

"Well," interrupted Rutger G. Tune, his moustache coming up under his nose, "I prefer my hired girls in the kitchen, not the parlour."

The Harvey system, with its chain of lunch-rooms and dining-rooms stretching across a continent from Chicago through the very desert itself, and beyond to California, was the boast of any true Westerner. Mrs. Tune's pride in it was incomprehensible to her Eastern-born husband. "Beastly idea, anyway," he said, "having to get off a train for your meals like that. And those cow towns!"

"We like it," said Mrs. Tune spiritedly.

"We?"

"We Westerners. And I noticed that you liked the quail pretty

well that they served you at the station of that cow town called Newton. You'd have paid ten dollars a portion for it in New York—and then it wouldn't have been fresh."

Still, they did not travel West again. But she loved it to the day she died.

At school the twins, Hilda and Hannah, had been known respectively as Tune and Cartoon. For nature, in her most prankish mood, having fashioned these two in like mould, yet had so slightly, so deftly, so fiendishly over-emphasised in Hannah that which was perfection in Hilda, that perfection became grotesquery—or almost that. It was only when they were together that the difference was strongly marked. People—strangers—seeing the two for the first time had a way of turning from the flawless purity of Hilda's contour to the exaggerated line that was Hannah's, and then blinking a little, as though to rid themselves of an absurd optical illusion. It was as though Nature, having wrought this perfect thing, had said pettishly: "What! You expect me to achieve this miracle a second time? No! . . . Here, I'll make a rough copy of it. But a masterpiece is a masterpiece. One doesn't repeat."

Hence Tune and Cartoon. Where Hilda's nose was the most exquisite example of that ordinarily vulgar feature, straight, fine-pored, delicately fluted at the nostrils, Hannah's, being the minutest fraction of an inch longer, was just too long; and the fluting, being a trifle wider, gave her countenance that rather combative look so trying to the beholder. Where Hilda's cheek-bones were just high enough to give her face its delicately heart-shaped outline and her eyes that little shadowed look of fatigue which men find so fascinating, Hannah's cheek-bones were broader, flatter, so that she had a somewhat Slavic cast. Still, if it had not been for Hilda's flawless beauty always there to mock her,

in the Union Station and the great upheaval in the lives of his motherless twin daughters. In July the girls were to leave the big Tune house, perched high on the hill that commanded such a sweeping and unobstructed Missouri view of nothing in particular.

"Father had it built up here," Hannah observed, a little grimly, perhaps, but without bitterness, "not because anything could be seen here from the top of the hill, but because everybody could see the house from the bottom of it. That's what our life has been, really, in the last ten years. A magnificent view of nothing at all."

The two had soberly been discussing that baffling problem known as ways and means. Of ways they had few. Of means they had practically nothing.

"There's only one thing to do, of course," Hilda said; "that is to get away from here. And there's only one place to go, and that's East. Our friends there know father's dead, but they don't know how completely smashed we are. I shan't tell them until I have to. We both have enough invitations to last us through the summer if we manage properly. The Allisters at Bar Harbour in July, and Isabel Kane's the first two weeks in August in the Adirondacks; and we might even manage Newport if we went about it properly and used a little——"

"And then what?" interrupted Hannah bluntly.

"I don't know. But at any rate we'd have made a move in the right direction. Our friends in the East are numbered among our very best people. Those are the contacts we'll have to keep up."

"On nine hundred and twenty dollars per lifetime?"

"Yes. Why not? Until something turns up. And it will, with those people back of us. There's something picturesque about being twins. It's considered *chic*. And orphan twins, too."



"Our education and clothes, and this huge house, and father's wine and food and horses, and——What did we live on?" "Bluff," said Hannah. (See page 38.)

Hannah might have been considered an average looking girl, which she really was—healthy, high-spirited, wholesome. For that matter, there were those who might have thought Hilda's lips a shade too thin, just as others thought Hannah's mouth too large.

That generous mouth of Hannah Tune's was the index to her character. It explained why she could be honestly proud and pleased when people exclaimed about her sister's loveliness. It made it possible for Hannah to say, as she watched the exquisite Hilda march across the greensward at the head of the historic Daisy Chain—the very day of the tragic telegram—that if the college had instituted a Poison Ivy Chain she, Hannah, would have been a prominent entrant.

People who knew them well were aware that the difference between the twins was more than a surface one. It went deep, deep into their characters. It cropped out in all sorts of ways. You saw it in the accumulated dust of days in the seeming dainty Hilda's hair-brush; in the condition of her bureau drawers; in the frequency with which she forgot to return money she had borrowed from Hannah; in her unflinching emphasis on the Tune side of her ancestry, ignoring quite the distaff or packing-house side; in her refusal to mingle with any but those whom she considered the most desirable type of girl at college. Her tone, in speaking of the undesirables, was startlingly like that of Rutger G. Tune, when he had discussed the brakemen and Harvey waitresses years before. Hannah's familiar at college, on the other hand, had been a girl from Galena, Illinois, who had got a scholarship and was working her way through. Hannah's old red sweater and her careless tam were likely to give you no hint of the fastidious freshness of the garments worn beneath—the be-ribboned corset-cover, the white embroidery petticoats, the lace-trimmed umbrella drawers of the period. Finally, this difference in face and character, less pronounced when they were children, became daily more noticeable as they grew older.

It had been June when Rutger G. Tune had caused the little flurry

"And penniless orphan twins makes it quite perfect, I suppose."

"All right, then. Suppose you suggest something better."

Hannah, for the moment, looked as nearly helpless as Hannah could, being handicapped by her height, her serenity of brow, and her aura of superb health. "I honestly haven't anything better to suggest, Hilda. I only know I can't go East with you and live on our very best people and be a *chic* twin."

"What are you going to do, then? What are you going to do? Stay here in Kansas City? Patronised by these people? What'll you live on? Really, Hannah, sometimes I think you're utterly——"

"I could teach school."

"Teach school!" Hilda echoed weakly. "You mean a girls' school somewhere in the East? But what? Your French isn't very good, and you know your English is—well, it's pure Kansas City. Your music is just passable. You hate history."

"Oh, I mean a school here somewhere in Kansas or Missouri, maybe. A country school. It doesn't pay much, but it's a living, for the present, at least. Besides, I like the West. You know that. I always have. A country school—and a horse to ride, perhaps, Saturdays and Sundays. I'd like it."

"Hannah Tune, you must be crazy! A country school! A horse on Saturday!"

"And Sunday," put in Hannah, a trifle maliciously—for Hannah. Suddenly she became tremendously serious. Her fine brow bore down upon Hilda, silencing her. "Look here, Hilda Tune. There's no use pretending we're not in a mess. We are. But we always have been. We simply didn't know it, that's all. But father knew it and shut his eyes to it, and pretended that something would turn up. Well, it didn't. Mercifully, he died before he had to do any explaining. Now, I'm not going on where he left off. I'm sick of pretending. I'm the plain Tune twin, with nine hundred and twenty dollars between me and what—"

(Continued on page 49.)

FRIDMAY'S KATYDID

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A CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME HERO: SINDBAD THE SAILOR TYING HIMSELF TO THE ROC'S LEG.

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"THE DIAMOND":

A FANTASY BY ALEXANDRE RZEWUSKI.

The diamond, universally acknowledged the gem of gems, has been known to history for about five thousand years, and stones may still exist that gleamed on the brow of Solomon or the Queen of Sheba. M. Rzewuski, in his exquisite fantasy, pictures an immense diamond as the diadem of an Eastern king, and his treatment of the subject recalls the words of the prophet Ezekiel: "Behold I have made thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant, harder than flint, have I made thy forehead. Fear them not." ("Adamant" here, of course, means "diamond," which is derived from "diamas," the Latin form of the Greek "adamas") In the East the diamond has ever had a mystical significance. It has been regarded as a treasure of the Almighty, revealed to man for the increase of his power and glory, and the wearing of a diamond upon the brow was considered to give a king strength against his enemies.

FROM THE PAINTING BY ALEXANDRE RZEWUSKI.



Yardley's Old English Lavender

AT the Dance, the Theatre, the Cabaret Show and wherever the charm of Perfume adds to the joy of the moment, Yardley's Old English Lavender is sure to be the dominant note.

Its beautiful clean fresh fragrance has been cherished by the Leaders of Taste and Fashion for over a Century. A lovely Old-World Perfume, it has always been fashionable and is always in good taste.

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A LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNDER THE CROSS.

FROM THE PAINTING ENTITLED "THE CRUSADERS BEFORE DAMIETTA (CRUSADE OF ST. LOUIS, 1248.)" BY AUGUSTE FRANÇOIS MARIE GORGUET, EXHIBITED IN THE PARIS SALON (SOCIÉTÉ DES ARTISTES FRANÇAIS) 1924.

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"CONSOLATION"

Drawn by A. L. Grace.

The old, old story. A lovers' tiff. And would you lay the blame on her? Hardly, seeing her there so sweet and tearful . . . Yet it takes two to make a quarrel, and as forewarned is forearmed, who knows but that the box of Maison Lyons Chocolates was left as consolation to stricken beauty.

And the last word—whose? You see her, thinking better maybe of the retort which comes stinging to her lips, while subconsciously a tapering finger carries consolation to a rosebud mouth from the Beauty Box of Maison Lyons Chocolates.

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JOAN THE MAID.



"THE MOST NOTABLE WARRIOR SAINT IN THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR."

FROM THE PICTURE BY KAY NEILSEN.



The woman who uses Lux need never worry about her hands. Lux is as mild as the finest toilet soap; it leaves the hands white and soft.



Lux for everything you wash yourself

There are many dainty things that you separate from the ordinary household washing because they are too precious to trust to other hands, too frail to risk in the family wash. Wash them with Lux. Lux will not harm anything that water alone will not harm.

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LUX

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there's a world of satisfaction
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Continued from page 37.

ever happens to you when your money's all gone. It's no use my trying to play the beautiful adventuress. I'm not equipped for it in face or temperament. It's July, and pretty late, but I'm going to try to get a school job by September somewhere."

A sort of glaze crept over Hilda's beautiful face, hardening it. "All right, then. Be a schoolma'am. But don't expect me to stay here with you. Sometimes, Hannah, I think there isn't a drop of Tune blood in you."

Hannah seemed to consider this a compliment. "I know it. After all these years of pruning and snipping, here I am, just bristling all over with Kansas. I guess there's no help for it."

Hilda, looking lovely and fragile in black, went to the Alisters, at Bar Harbour. Hannah had not yet secured a school, but there were rumours of one to be had in Eldorado, Kansas. "Oh, my goodness!" Hilda had said when she heard of it. At the last minute Hannah had stuffed five hundred of her own nine hundred and twenty into Hilda's bag. "I won't need it," she said, above Hilda's faint protests. "I'll be earning money soon. And you'll want it pretty badly if you're going to make any kind of showing in the among-those-present column in the Newport society news. Linsey-woolsey, whatever that is, will be all I'll need in Eldorado."

By the first of August Hannah was told the Eldorado school was hers: She wrote Hilda the news, jubilantly. Hilda was in the Adirondacks, according to schedule. Hannah got ready her linsey-woolseys, including the old red sweater of college skating days. In the middle of August Hannah was notified that Eldorado's last year's teacher was returning after all, and that here was one month's salary, and it was hoped Miss Tune had been put to no inconvenience.

Miss Tune was not only inconvenienced, but indignant, and a little frightened. Her first impulse was to telegraph to Hilda; so she didn't. The Tune twins had been brought up on telegrams. Rutger G. Tune had hated letter-writing. At this critical moment a telegram from Hilda—her father's daughter—said that she had a chance to go abroad in October with Mrs. Courtney Paige as a sort of pet, pampered companion. And what did Hannah think about it? Hannah, feeling suddenly alone in the world, and terribly twinless, answered: "It sounds heavenly. You must go." Then she began to read the "want ad." columns of the *Kansas City Star*.

M-m-m—clerks wanted. Experienced. . . . Binders wanted. What was a binder? Hannah wondered. And what did they bind? . . .

Ladies to solicit orders for marvellous new patent contrivance warranted to revolutionise housework. On commission only. . . . Waitresses wanted—oh, my goodness!—what was there for her to do? Wait a minute! . . . Waitresses wanted for Harvey hotel dining-rooms and lunch-rooms in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and California. Apply Employment Department, Union Station, Room 15.

Something came creeping back into Hannah's consciousness like the fragments of a tune once heard and long forgotten. . . . "Fine stock . . . pioneer stuff . . . Harvey waitresses . . . future aristocracy . . ."

Hannah had been a very little girl when her mother, with that look of high pride and honest indignation, had delivered herself of that speech. But it came back to her now, as did the sneer on her father's face. Colorado—New Mexico—Arizona—California! Hannah took a long breath, exhaled it, and applied Employment Department, Union Station, Room 15.

She had a little sick feeling at the pit of her stomach and her knees seemed strangely fluid; but there was a picture of the Grand Canyon on the wall of the little waiting-room, and a map whose black lines went bounding across mountains and deserts and plains and mesas in a way to take your breath away. Hannah regarded these, and they gave her courage and even a feeling of exaltation which always came to her, strangely enough, when she caught a remote hint of that which lay Pacificwards from Missouri.—A little soaring sensation. A feeling of freedom. If she had had wings she would have flapped them now.

There were five other girls in the anteroom. One of them had a foreign look—Polish or Bohemian, Hannah thought. Two, evidently friends, had entered together in flashy clothes and exhaling a veritable stench of strong, cheap perfume. Hannah thought they didn't look exactly pioneer material or future aristocrats. A fourth was a pale, quiet girl who appeared listless and limp. "She's going out for her health," Hannah decided. "Arizona, probably, if they'll take her." The fifth girl resembled Hannah's Vassar chum from Galena, Illinois. Hannah found herself smiling at this girl companionably. The girl smiled back at her. Encouraged thus, Hannah moved to a chair next to her.

"Are you—have you ever been—are you going out West as a Harvey girl?"

"Yes—to stay this time, I hope."

"Oh, you've been before?"

"Two years ago, but only for the summer. I'm a school-teacher. I took a Harvey job two summers ago because I thought it would be fun, kind of; and a cheap way to see something of the West. I'm from Albia, Iowa. You ought to have heard my folks when I said I was going as a waitress. They didn't know."

"And now you're going to stay?"

"Long as I want to, anyway. I'm lucky. They're sending me to the Canyon." Then, as Hannah looked blank: "Oh, I guess you don't know about the different stations. You see, all the girls are crazy to go to the hotels at the Grand Canyon, or Albuquerque, or big places like that. We call them heaven. Now, Needles, California, and Rincon, New Mexico, are purgatory. We say that's where bad girls go for punishment. Needles is two hundred miles from the Mojave Desert, in a sort of pocket. And hot! Phew! When it's a hundred and twenty-five there, they think it's getting on towards summer."

Hannah looked a little worried. "Do you think a new girl—"

The other shook her head emphatically. "Some. But not you." Her glance encompassed Hannah's face, her clothes, her manner. "Gracious, no! You look like a Canyon girl, or Albuquerque, except that perhaps you'll lose out because you're too pretty."

Hannah stared, smiled. "Me!"

"You know, don't you, that Harvey's never hire girls that are awfully pretty. They found they couldn't keep them out West. They just melted away into marriage with some rancher or railroad man or mining—"

"Then it's true?"

But the other girl misunderstood. "Oh, my yes! They like to hire them neat, plain and sensible. They're very strict, you know.

You've got to behave just so during hours—and after hours, for that matter. In before twelve—"

She broke off suddenly as the door to the inner office opened. She was next in the list of waiting applicants. "See you later. Wish me luck!"—over her shoulder.

Hannah never saw her again. Two days later Hannah Tune, daughter of the late Rutger G. Tune, of the Massachusetts Tunes, to whom the signers of the Declaration of Independence were mere upstarts, was on her way to San Querto, New Mexico, with a Harvey Santa Fé railroad pass in her handbag. She was enjoying herself immensely, though the ride was hot, dusty, and seemingly endless. Every now and then she went into the wash-

room and scraped prairie dust off her clothes and face, and railroad cinders out of her hair. Then she washed for the sake of the relief the cool, wet towel gave against her hot cheeks, and went back to her seat to resume her staring out of the window. Prairie, plain, corn, corn, corn, corn—hundreds of miles of it, an unmarine ocean, billowing away and away to the horizon. And, like the ocean, it makes the beholder content or restless. Hannah felt soothed, relaxed, satisfied.

With her Santa Fé pass was an identification card entitling her to meals free of charge at all stops where meals were regularly scheduled. At these stations along the way passengers were notified that they would have half an hour for what was called "refreshments." They swarmed out of the coaches like ants scurrying in alarm from a disturbed ant-hill. The sound of a deep-throated brass gong greeted them as they flocked towards the dining and lunch rooms. Hannah soon discovered that she preferred the rush and scramble of the lunch-rooms to the more dignified and orderly ceremony of the dining-room.

Her first meal in the dining-room at Hutchinson, Kansas, had been of immense interest to her, flavoured with almost hysterical amusement. She had never imagined anything like it. A hundred or even two hundred passengers were fed here in half an hour. The meal marched as inevitably, as irresistibly, as death itself. Each table seated eight. The first course lay smoking before you as you seated yourself. With that scant half-hour snapping at their heels, the passengers settled grimly, determinedly, to this business of consuming their dollar's-worth. It was a huge meal, hot, savoury, appetising. But the dining hundreds made a ghastly ceremony of it. Not a murmur of conversation; eyes on their plates. They were grimly merciless, thorough. No sounds but the clink of cutlery against china, the low voices of the white, starched waitresses murmuring a chant of "Teacoffeemilk? Teacoffeemilk? Teacoffeemilk?"

Controlling, soothing this strange company, as unconvinical as the elfin bowlers in Rip Van Winkle's mountain retreat, walked the Harvey hotel manager, bland, watchful, weaving in and out among the tables, hands behind his back. And as he walked he intoned: "Pas-sen-gers on number nine have *thirty minutes* for dinner. Take—your—time!" Fifteen minutes later, again as before: "Pas-sen-gers on number nine



Mrs. Tune . . . had spoken up at this. "My father used to say that those Western railroad brakemen and Harvey lunch-room waitresses were the future aristocracy of the West." (See page 38.)

still have fifteen minutes for dinner. Take—your—time!" Gobble, gobble. Clink, clink. Munch, munch. Gulp, gulp. Soup, meat, vegetables, salad, olives, iced tea, dessert. "Pas-sen-gers on number nine still have five minutes——" They swept out like a horde of locusts, leaving a devastated dining-room.

No, Hannah decided, the dining-room was not for her. She would eat in the lunch-room, where ham-and-eggs ordered one minute appeared miraculously before you the next; where hung the scent of coffee; where blood-red half-moons of water-melon glowed at you from behind glass; where you sat, perched on a revolving stool, before a white slab of counter, with infinitesimal cream-pitchers and little butter chips and glasses of ice-water spinning and sliding all about you. Hannah became less and less a Tune; more and more the daughter of her plain, democratic, high-spirited mother.

This trip had all the flavour of a stolen holiday, for the truth of it is that at the last moment she had not been able to tell her plans to Hilda. She lacked the courage to write to her twin, there in the Adirondacks at the Kanes' elaborately rustic lodge, "I am going West to be a Harvey hired girl." Instead, she had given Hilda to understand that her mission at San Querto was to teach school. She dilated on it, in her guilt, and made it sound quite picturesque and charming. Much nicer, she said, than the Eldorado school, about which she had decided adversely. Hannah had been in San Querto almost ten days before her twin's reply reached her.

"I suppose," wrote Hilda, among other things, "you'll be the pretty Western school-teacher of fiction, and be rescued from Indians by a rancher in chaps and frijoles, or whatever it is they wear, and marry him and live happily ever after. Can you possibly spare me some money, Cartoon dear?"

Hannah, in her black uniform and white apron, read the letter as she stood behind the counter in a quiet hour at the San Querto Station lunch-room. She had just emerged from the bewilderment, shock, and chaos of the past ten days. A certain accustomed serenity again sat on her brow. In those ten days she had learned much, suffered much, wept much, slept little. She had learned and suffered in the Harvey lunch-room; wept and lain awake in the little, bare, clean, white-washed bed-room on the top floor of the Santa Fé Station, with the engines puffing, hissing, snorting, clanging in her racked head, grinding, it seemed, over her very knees. And yet now, so miraculously do we adjust ourselves to environment—if we are Hannahs—that the white-tiled lunch-room seemed a zestful, cheery place, and the little white-walled bed-room a snug refuge where she could be alone. The trains, after a fortnight, bothered her no more than does the chirping of birds the country dweller.

Now she read her letter in a quiet moment between trains, seated

on a little stool behind the horseshoe of the counter. It had just been handed her by the hotel manager.

"Letter from home?" asked Louise, the red-haired girl who was on duty with her.

"From my twin-sister."

"Twins! Don't say! Do you look just alike?"

"Oh, no!" Hannah said, rather absently, dipping into her letter again. "Not a bit. My sister's a beauty."

Louise looked at her sharply as she sat there in her neat black and white, her hair done in the smooth, simple fashion that the Harvey rules decreed, her throat rising so firm and white from the flat collar that finished the neck-line of her blouse. "Well, you're no eyesore!" she exclaimed.

Hannah had smiled quietly. "You ought to see Hilda."

She sent Hilda another two hundred dollars of the tiny sum that now remained of her original nine hundred and twenty.

By the end of the month Hannah had learned so much that it seemed to her that her life until now had been merely marking time. She had learned things pleasant and disagreeable, interesting and dull, exhilarating and depressing. She learned to call scheduled trains by their first names as if they were individuals—Nine—Thirteen—Five. Eight's due in from the West. There's Eleven from the East. She learned to remember six orders taken at one time in the rush of the crowd just off a waiting train. She learned to keep her head under a fire of orders volleyed at her like hail.

"Ham'n eggs!"

"Apple-pie! Glass milk!"

"Coffee!"

"Cheese on rye!"

"Liver'n onions!"

Short. Sharp. Relentless. Unescapable. Stinging.

She learned that San Querto itself, though an important Santa Fé railroad division point, was an ugly little Mexican town, squatting flat on the mesa, its new houses staring and unlovely, its Old Town, where the Mexicans lived, squalid and unpicturesque. Its roads were mud wallows, its main street sordid, its Mexicans lazy, dirty, and thieving. Yet there was the Western mountain air, and there was the Western sky, and there, beyond the town, were the Spanish Peaks, those mysterious, purple-black, twin mountains rising abruptly, without warning, magically, from the flat mesa itself. They were, Hannah thought, like no other mountain peaks in the world. They thrilled her, bewitched her. When first they had loomed up before her as she gazed out of her train window, she had given a little cry and had sat forward in her seat, staring. There stretched the sage-green mesa, for miles. Not a foot-

[Continued overleaf.]

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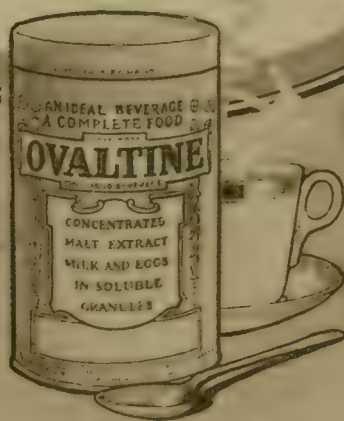
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P 272.

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hill. Not even a hillock. Then suddenly, without preparation, rising out of this flat plateau and soaring straight up to snow, loomed the purple Spanish Peaks against the sunset sky. The tears had come to Hannah's eyes. She felt as if she had come home.

Now she had learned to look at them the first thing in the morning, to peer into the darkness in their direction the last thing at night. She learned to wash and iron her own shirtwaists. She learned to ride a Western horse on mountain roads. She learned to work "nights one week, days one week" without feeling sleepy during night-work week. She learned that cowboys, though picturesque, do not change their shirts as often as they might. She learned those feats of legerdemain which all waitresses acquire through experience—a certain swing of the ketchup bottle, a juggling of hot coffee-cups, a whisk of the towel.

And she learned to watch for the entrance of Dan Yard. Dan Yard was substitute brakeman on a branch line freight-train running into San Querto four nights a week. Substitute brakeman on a branch line freight-train is the lowest possible position in the railroad world.

She had first seen him in the second week of her coming to San Querto. She was working nights that week. He had come off his train at two a.m., and had dropped into the lunch-room after washing up, as was the custom of brakemen, engineers, and conductors at the end of a run, for a cup of coffee and a sandwich or a couple of doughnuts. It was against rules for Harvey girls to carry on social conversation with lunch-counter patrons. No pretence of swishing imaginary crumbs off the slab while exchanging flirtatious pleasantries with the willing cowboys, ranchmen, or railroad men was allowed here. A greeting, yes. An amiable word or two. But that was all. Yet Hannah noticed a little intangible

change come over the two girls on duty with her that night as Dan Yard swung open the screen door and, entering, threw one leg over a stool at the counter, pushed back his cap, and smiled. His smile was not the fictional smile of rare sweetness, lighting up his whole face. It was a schoolboy grin, engaging but somewhat tough.

"Any raspberries?" inquired Dan of the girl at whose station he was seated.

"Yes."

"Well, I don't want any."

"Thought you didn't."

Having taken her part in this brilliant dialogue, which was evidently a formula, she set before him a cup of smoking coffee and his plate of doughnuts. Hannah by now was hardened to seeing monstrous food consumed at unseemly hours. Half hidden by the nickel coffee-urn, she turned to look at him. He dumped three generous spoonfuls of sugar into his cup, emptied the contents of his cream-pitcher, stirred the mixture, and took a great swallow of the scalding, revivifying liquid. The size of that great gulp brought his head up and back, so that he found himself staring at Hannah over the rim of his inverted cup. Hannah's gaze

met his. *Ting!* went something like a bell inside her.

She saw a slim, hard, rather pugnacious-looking young Irishman of perhaps twenty-four or five. Freckled. His eyes were wide apart, clear, and singularly bright. She thought she had never seen anyone so wide awake at two a.m. He evidently had just washed with strong soap and slicked his hair after coming in off his run. His head was damp where the pocket-comb had tidied it. Later, Hannah learned that he was bow-legged and some three inches shorter than she. All their married life—for she married Dan Yard—she tried not to let him feel this difference

Continued on page 53.



"Letter from home?" asked Louise. . . . "From my twin sister." "Twins! Don't say! Do you look just alike?" "Oh no!" Hannah said. "My sister's a beauty." "Well, you're no eyesore!" (See p. 50.)

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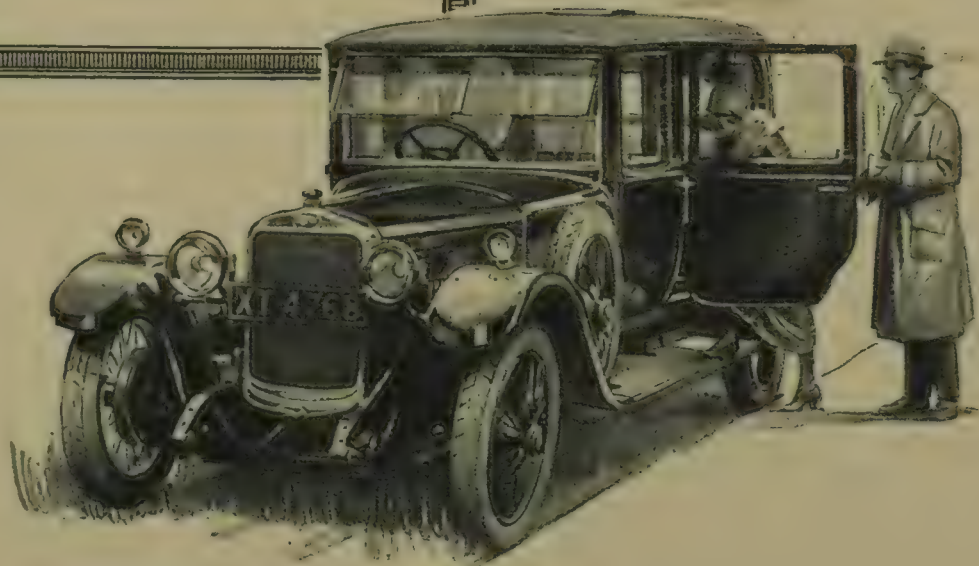
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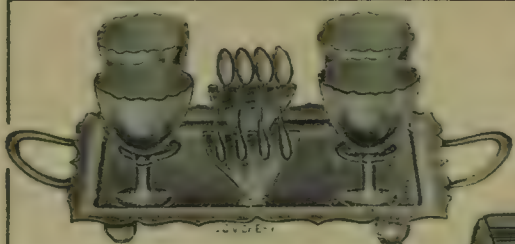
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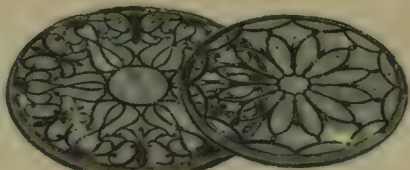


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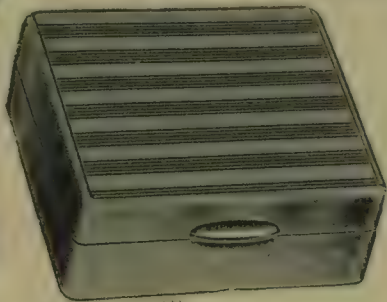
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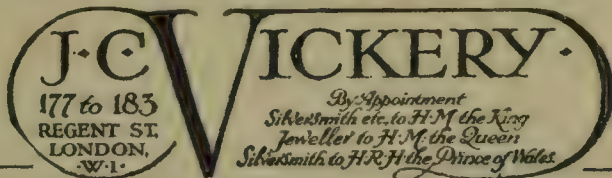
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in their height; did her hair flat and wore low-heeled shoes, for she loved him terribly, and he was a sensitive and somewhat vain Irishman, as all good Irishmen are.

What Dan Yard saw of Hannah over the rim of his upturned coffee-cup she never quite knew. He never seemed able to put it into coherent words. He would begin, when she asked him, "I said to myself, 'There she is,' like that. 'There's Mrs. Dan Yard.' I felt all the blood up in my head, fit to smother me."

"It was the hot coffee."

"It was the hot love," said Dan, being the reverse of mincing.

He had finished his coffee that night, had reached for his glass of ice-water, swallowed it in one long draught, sliding one piece of conveniently sized ice into his mouth along with the fluid, and had walked out, crunching the ice between his strong yellow teeth.

"Why!" said the girl who had waited on him. "Look! Dan Yard hardly touched his doughnuts at all."

For six weeks Hannah withstood him. In those six weeks she learnt much about Dan Yard. He came from a family of railroad workers. When he talked of this it was as though he were descended from a long line of aristocrats. His father had been Engineman John Yard, killed in the wreck at Algodones on the Santa Fé. Another uncle killed acting as yard-master at La Junta. Two cousins were brakemen. Another a conductor. His family tree, and proud of it. He had almost gone through high school. Quit his third year because he had to go to work. By next January he would have his job as regular brakeman on the main line. Then they could be married.



He found himself staring at Hannah over the rim of his inverted cup. Hannah's gaze met his. *Ting!* went something like a bell inside her. (See page 52.)

"No!" said Hannah, trying to laugh. Terribly frightened, yet with a certain crazy feeling of warmth and happiness suffusing her whole being. Then, "No," faintly, his eyes on hers, and her own closing flutteringly as she felt his strong, oil-grimed hand on her arm.

Hilda was in Europe. In January Hannah wrote her, fearfully yet boldly—and certainly baldly—"I am going to be married."

They had been married some weeks before Hilda's reply reached them. "I hope he's one of those millionaire ranchers or oil kings that seem to grow exclusively out there in the West where men are men, or whatever it is the poem says."

The hot tears of resentment and indignation came to Hannah's eyes. She spent hard-earned dollars to cable her answer, unthriftyly worded: "He's a king all right, but not the kind you mean. Dan's a brakeman on the Santa Fé railroad."

A cable from Hilda: "You must be insane. Cable if a joke."

Hannah replied tersely, "No joke."

Silence. Silence that lasted twenty years.

They went housekeeping in one of the ugly little San Querto houses and became part of the

little bare railroad town, where caste lines were drawn as definitely as in Mayfair. Brakemen's wives were beneath freight train conductors' wives in the social scale. Station-masters' wives patronised conductors' wives. The wife of a division superintendent queened it over the wives of both station-masters and passenger-train conductors. As for the wife of a district superintendent! Royalty.

Hannah busied herself in the little house with its mission furniture and its Navajo rugs; but while Dan was gone she found time heavy on

(Continued overleaf.)

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her hands, now that she had left the lunch-room. She decided to learn to be a telegrapher, acquired this with amazing speed, and was telegrapher at San Querto for two years, until her first child was born. They had two boys. Always there was with her that little fear ever present in the heart of the railroad worker's wife.

"Dan, I wish you'd stop railroading."

"Stop? What for?"

"I'm afraid you'll get k—hurt."

"Me! Naw! I won't get killed."

"They did."

"Not me."

The sound of the trains striding and elbowing their way in and out of this little railroad town, out to the prairies and mountains beyond, no longer disturbed her as mere noise. But she used to lie awake, always, on the nights when he was out on his run—wide awake, listening, until she heard the whistle of Seven, Dan's train. He had a special signal for her—two long blasts, two short, sharp ones. Dangerous work, braking. She knew that. They made him freight-train conductor one year later. Not so dangerous, and better pay. A step up the ladder. By the time she had got accustomed to her duties as telegrapher in the little station at San Querto he was promoted to yard-master at that point. Dangerous again.

Sitting in the little bay window of the shabby red-brick station, her subconscious ear intent on the click of the keys, she would watch for him. It was his duty to shunt freight, direct the tangle of loaded and unloaded cars, see that they got in and out of the spider-web of tracks on their way East or West. When she saw the small, wiry, bow-legged figure crossing the tracks towards the station she would go to meet him, the old red sweater buttoned up tight about her full, firm figure. It seemed to her that all her married life she was watching for that little, wiry, bow-legged figure from some window or another, all the way from the dilapidated station at San Querto to the window of the great Spanish hacienda that was built in 1920, within magnificent view of the Spanish Peaks. He never failed to appear just before fear had got its icy fingers on her heart. And she never let him know that she had been fearful.

The rise of Dan Yard is history in the annals of the Santa Fé road. They tell it as a sort of saga. Yet it all seemed natural enough in the actual happening. From brakeman to freight-train conductor, conductor to yard-master, yard-master to station-master at San Querto, Hannah with him all the time, toning down his roughness—"Tuning him down," she called it, saying quietly, "Now, Dan!" when he became too coltish. He liked a pretty face and a trim figure, and she knew it, and kept her figure trim, for she knew that to hold an Irishman you must be vigilant and wary. He was the kind of husband who breaks out occasionally into playful tousling of hair and pinching of cheeks and bruising squeezes of shoulders. When he got too rough—"Now, Dan!" with fine dignity and composure. He would subside. But she enjoyed it nevertheless. Just enough Tune in her to keep him impressed. Plenty of her spirited mother to hold him.

At thirty he became an "office man," clerk to the division superintendent at San Querto. At thirty-three he was division superintendent. Hannah, if she wanted, could now queen it over the conductors' wives. For the division superintendent has a private car, if you please. Not a very good private car, it is true. An old passenger coach usually, carefully gutted out and made over, fitted with compartments, and finished in the old redwood and gimcracky scroll-work of a past era in railroad decoration. But a private car, nevertheless. They could use it to run to Omaha or to Kansas City if they wanted to. Hannah Yard could take a carload of conductors' wives to the opera, if opera there happened to be within a distance of five hundred miles. But she never did.

From division superintendent he was promoted to district superintendent. No trifling about it now. Dan Yard was an important man in the road. They say his wife had a lot to do with it. A smart woman, Mrs. Yard. And handsome isn't the name for it. They say she was the daughter of Rutger G. Tune. Don't you remember? Did you never hear of old Tune, of Kansas City? Yeh. Used to be a big bug and a sport. Went through his wife's millions and died pretty shady. Well, nothing shady about this Mrs. Yard. And Dan? Say, he'll be general manager yet. Watch him.

From district superintendent to assistant general superintendent. Then, inevitably, general superintendent. There is, after that, only one step; but it is a momentous step, a seven-leagued stride. It is the unrealised dream of every railroad official. It is not only the Chair at His Right Hand. It is the Right Hand.

Dan Yard at forty-six was general manager of the Santa Fé road.

The Yards' private car now was a thing of rosewood and silken hangings and finest steel. They were Royalty. Yet, twenty years later, if you happened to be a guest in this private movable palace of theirs, and if, peering out of the window in the darkness, you asked, "Where are we now, I wonder? What's this place we're coming to?" Hannah Yard could close her eyes and, listening intently a moment, open them to say, "We're just coming into Trinidad. I can tell by the bump of the wheels over the rails. I was here when Dan laid out these yards."

During these twenty years she had thought of Hilda thousands of times, and sadly. She took a New York paper as soon as they could afford it, in the hope of seeing Hilda's name mentioned in the society columns, perhaps. She wrote to her often. Her letters were unanswered. When she placed a return address on these letters they came back rubber-stamped, "Not at address given."

Though Dan's position took him frequently to New York, Hannah rarely accompanied him. She dreaded it, somehow. Once she had tried to trace Hilda there, but had not succeeded. She thought of a detective agency, but shrank from the idea. After all, Hilda had not wanted her; Hilda had deserted her, ridiculed her, just when she needed her love most. She seldom spoke to Dan of Hilda; as the years went on Hilda's name was never mentioned. The two boys were at college, the elder at a school of engineering—"Like his pa," laughed Dan Yard; the other at an agricultural school. He wanted to be a rancher and raise stock and alfalfa and oranges and sugar-beets and cantaloupes.

"All on one ranch?" laughed his mother. "That isn't a ranch. That's a paradise."

The Yard place, a great glowing creamy Spanish pile situated in the valley, but on a slight rise, and almost in the shadow of the purple and glowingly mysterious Spanish Peaks, was known throughout the West.

You were likely to find as guests there anyone from the President of the United States to a flock of Harvey waitresses on a ten days' vacation. A Sorolla over the fireplace in the living-room; a gorgeous old vestment of brocade and velvet thrown over this screen bought in Granada.

"Come on along to New York with me," said Dan Yard, in tousling mood. "Come on, old girl. Do you good. They sent me a catalogue of that Spanish stuff to be sold at Barrios'. There's one old tapestry velvet that sounds like the thing you want for that balcony railing exactly. Come on. Let's take a look at it, anyway."

The General Manager's private car, summoned casually, like an

automobile. Thousands of miles over mountain passes, mesas, plains, prairies, cornfields. Omaha, Chicago, New York. "I wired Barrios'," said Dan, at breakfast in New York, "and he just called up to say he was sending some stuff over here to the hotel. I thought as long as your head didn't feel so good this morning—"

A lean, wiry, pugnacious, bow-legged little Irishman, looking, in spite of greying hair and his carefully tailored suit and the dignity of his office, incredibly like the tough young brakeman of the San Querto lunch-room twenty years ago.

Like a cue in a play, then the telephone bell rang. Barrios' representative calling. And "Oh, dear!" said Hannah, glancing down at a foamy but informal negligé, "you talk to him for a minute, Dan. I'll do my hair and get into something. Don't let him sell you anything till I—remember that terrible table you—"

As she dressed hurriedly she could hear him in the adjoining room.

"Well, say, that's pretty. . . . No, I don't like that one. . . . I don't know, I just don't like it. It doesn't look Spanish to me. My wife knows. She'll be in in a minute. She's—she may like it. . . . It don't look to me. . . ."

A man's voice in low protest; then a woman's voice—high, hard, nervous, icy. "Not authentically Spanish! There are only two other pieces like it in the world. The other two were sold yesterday to a family representing our very best people. You will like it, I know, if you will just live with it awhile—"

Hannah, at her dressing-table, stood up, clutching her dressing-gown to her breast. She whirled to face her husband, who had just come in. He was grinning. He dropped his voice to a rasping whisper. He even tiptoed, in some absurd delusion of increased secrecy.

"Say, Hannah, there's three of 'em sent up with the stuff from Barrios'! A regular troupe. A kid to carry the bundles and a young Spanish feller, and he's got on a lavender shirt and perfume, so help me! But listen. Don't get mad at me, Hannah, when you see her—the woman—Say—she looks enough like you, in a kind of awful way, to be a cartoon of you. By golly, she does! A kind of snaky dress, and red stuff on her mouth, and talks about 'our best people'—"

A sob of premonition shook Hannah Yard as she ran past her husband and into the next room to face the woman sent up by Barrios.

THE END.



"Don't get mad at me, Hannah, when you see her—the woman—Say—she looks enough like you, in a kind of awful way, to be a cartoon of you. By golly, she does!"

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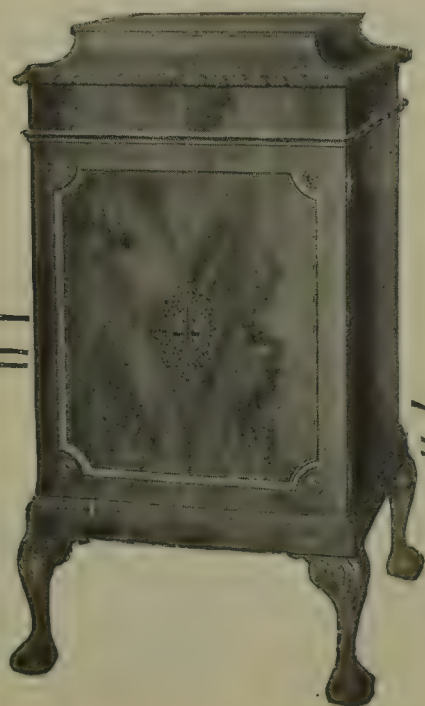
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FAILURE.

By HOLLOWAY HORN.



LOYD MERRETT was amazed to find an obliterating fog. While returning to his flat an hour or so before, he had noticed a faint and not unpleasant opalescence in the evening air, but by the time he went out at eight o'clock it had developed the colour and opacity of porridge.

A taxi was out of the question; the only course was to find his way to the Underground Station. But, once he had left the dim light around the entrance to Toynbee Mansions, he doubted whether even this was possible. It was like walking into grey, deleting cotton-wool.

He paused at the corner, wondering whether he should continue his journey. The faint yellowness of the shop there reminded him that he wanted cigarettes. A lady was talking to the tobacconist as he entered. At the first glance there was something familiar in the poise of her body, and, as she turned, recognition came like a flood to both.

He raised his hat, but remained awkwardly silent.

"I'm lost, Mr. Merrett!" she said, with a laugh.

"I've never known such a sudden fog," he said, perhaps a little too casually.

"I was meeting my husband at Lady Castleman's, but the chauffeur simply could not go on. I attempted to find my way to the Underground, but had lost my bearings so completely that I came in here to find out where I was."

"I am on my way to the station; we'd better adventure it together, Mrs. Warrilow."

A smile, ironic and yet tender, swept across her face.

"Thank you very much," was what she said, but whether it represented the thought in her mind only she knew.

The tobacconist looked from one to the other, but he was a very experienced tobacconist, and remained silent.

"Did you ever hear of such a howling coincidence, Joan?" Merrett was saying as the fog closed round them. "I haven't seen you for two years, and we meet like this."

"It is . . . strange," she said quietly—so quietly that he barely heard her, and quite lost the peculiar intonation of her voice.

Someone bumped into them, growled, and passed on into the obliterating fog.

"I'm beginning to wonder if we shall ever find that station," Merrett said; "and, if we do, whether you will find your way at the other end."

"Anyway, if we get to the station it will be light and warm. I'm half-frozen!" In the darkness he felt her draw her cloak around her.

"Look here, Joan, my rooms are only a stone's-throw away. Come in for an hour; the fog may lift. I'll make you some hot coffee. Just think of it—hot coffee! Steaming hot coffee!"

"My dear Lloyd, don't be absurd!" There was no annoyance in her tone. Rather as if she were stating an obvious fact.

"Of course, if you prefer the fog——"

"That's even more absurd. As if *anyone* would prefer this horrible fog, you silly old thing!"

"Then come! What possible harm is there?"

[Continued overleaf.]

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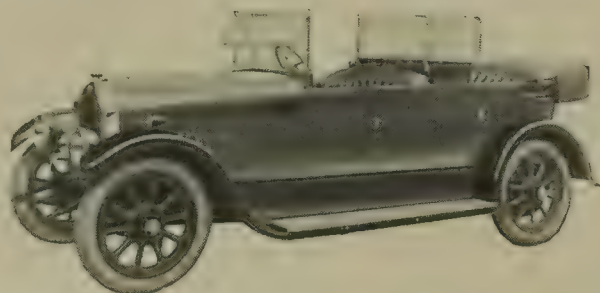


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"It is dreadful!" she said, with reference, apparently, to the fog.

"And it's getting colder!"

He took her arm and gently turned her round.

"It will probably lift very soon," he urged. "Goodness knows where we shall get to if we go on like this."

"All right!" she said, with a laugh. "I'm frozen through and through, and I'm in the mood to-night when nothing seems to matter. I think I breathed it in with the fog!"

The laugh, more than anything else about her, stirred his memories. A low, slightly husky laugh.

A few minutes later he was opening the door of his flat. He stood aside for her to enter.

She stopped in the doorway of his sitting-room, and remained standing there for a few moments, looking into the dimly lit room almost as if it were familiar to her.

"It's just like you!" she said, turning her head to meet his eyes. "Just the room I should have pictured as yours. Dark oak, everything calm, subdued. You're rather a dear, you know, Lloyd," she added inconsequently.

"It's a man's room, you mean?"

"Dreadfully so!"

"Is that altogether my fault?"

"I wasn't criticising the room, Lloyd." She crossed slowly to the fire. For a while she stood leaning against the mantelpiece, looking into the little leaping flames, before she knelt down and held out her hands to them.

He watched her gravely.

"I've often visualised you in this room, Joan," he said in an odd tone. "Let me take your cloak—it must be wet through."

She slipped it from her shoulders, watching him place it on the back of a chair.

"You like my frock?" she asked, as he turned.

"It is very beautiful. I always liked you in black. Do you remember that night at the Denbys' dance?"

"No!" she laughed, as she sat in the chair he had placed for her. "I do not remember. I have forgotten all those riotous evenings. I'm a respectable married lady, Lloyd. Why have you

not been to see me all these years? We were such good friends in the old days."

"As you put it, it sounds bad," he said. "Anyone with no knowledge of the facts would imagine that you and I were just good friends, and nothing more; and that, when you married, I lost interest in you. Is that a fair statement of what happened?"

"I know you *imagined* you were in love with me"

"Is that a fair statement, either?"

"Yes. I think it is," she said firmly.

There was a quiet smile on his face now.

"I loved you," he said slowly. "I would have given you anything I had in those days."

She was contemplating something in the fire. Her eyes were almost closed.

"Yes, I think you would—in those days. But we're older now, Lloyd, and wiser," she went on quietly. "Don't you often thank Providence that I refused you? What use should I have been to you, or to any man?" She spoke lightly for all the bitterness in her words.

He lit a cigarette before he replied—

"You were different then, Joan. If you had married me, you would still have been different. Your money has spoiled you, made you cynical."

"You mean that I've changed so much that"—she hesitated for the word—"that the old foolishness is dead?"

But he smiled instead of replying.

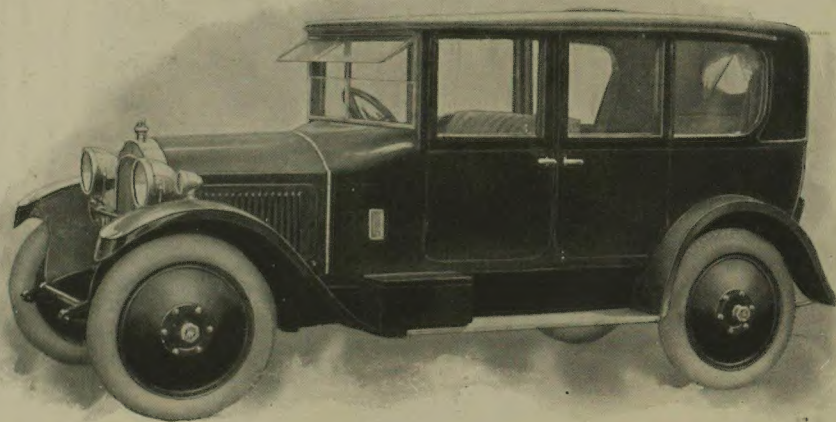
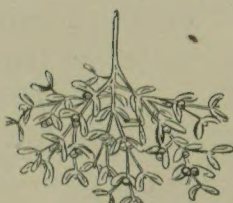
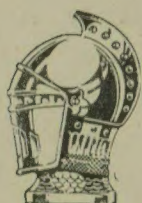
"You always were the most provoking of men." For the first time irritation had crept into her tone. "And, besides," she went on, "you're not fair. When you asked me to marry you, you hadn't a bean in the world. You were in debt, even. Lloyd, you *must* see my point of view! My people were as poor as church mice."

"But you believed in my ultimate success?"

"I did; but it was so long coming. And that reminds me. I thought your cross-examination of poor little Mrs. Jordan yesterday positively brutal!"

"I don't agree. For such women I have no sympathy. One can be tolerant towards a person who marries for love, but fails to achieve

[Continued overleaf.]



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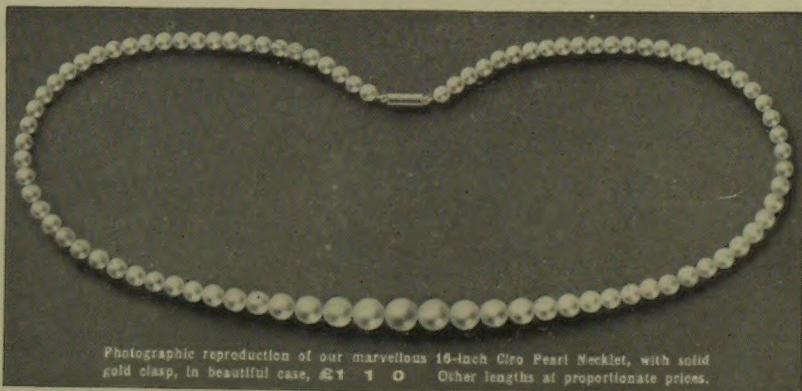
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happiness. She married for money, and she got money; afterwards she hadn't the decency to stand by her bargain."

"But you browbeat her, Lloyd; you tricked her!" she insisted.

"I got the truth out of her; that's my job!"

"I suppose you can't be expected to see a woman's point of view," she commented, with a little shrug of her shoulders, and a sound that might have been a sigh.

"Not the point of view of such a woman as Mrs. Jordan. Unfaithful, a liar, without loyalty or even gratitude. No, I'm afraid I can't."

"You're not married, Lloyd," she said, with a sudden drop in her voice. "Love matches must get a bit boring, sometimes; but if a woman marries without love, there are times when . . ." She did not complete her thought.

"If a woman marries for money and gets money, she should stand by her bargain," he insisted.

"That puts the case in a tight little logical nutshell, doesn't it?" she asked mockingly.

"Perhaps I was rude!"

"That never deterred you from saying what you wanted to," she laughed, and continued in a new tone: "Don't you think your point of view morbidly middle-class?"

"You thought I'd hang around like a lap-dog after you were married?"

"I wasn't speaking personally," she said blandly; "but I certainly did hope that I should see you sometimes, even after I was married. Success has had exactly the effect on you that you say money has on me."

"Success!"—he uttered the word with a laugh. "If I had been a failure, in all probability I should still be hopelessly in love."

"You are not flattering!"

"I was not attempting to be."

Suddenly she smiled, as if at some memory. She leaned forward in her chair, her chin resting on her two hands.

"You're very much more amusing than you used to be, Lloyd. I think there must be something in love that temporarily kills a man's sense of humour."

"There would not be so many unhappy marriages otherwise. By the way, I forgot all about the hot coffee."

"It's the one compliment you've paid me. Please don't worry now, though. And so the old Romance is quite dead? I'm rather sorry—for your sake. A successful man with a hopeless Romance is kept out of all kinds of danger. You know, Lloyd, I should hate to see any other woman make a fool of you. You *do* understand that, don't you?"

He laughed, but did not answer the question.

"If you had been half as rude in the old days I think I might even have married you," she said, after a little silence.

"As a retort?" he asked.

"Anyway, it would have been an effective one. What's the fog doing?"

He crossed to the window. "It's lifting a little," he said.

"Then I'll be going," she said, rising.

"But you've not been here ten minutes!"

"Nevertheless," she said, with a little gesture, "I am going."

She stopped at the door and looked slowly round his room, then at him. For a long second her eyes held his.

"You've changed more than I have," she said. "More, even, than you know."

"In some ways, you haven't changed at all, Joan."

She laughed that husky little laugh of hers and turned away.

At the corner of the street, just beyond the tobacconist's, a crawling taxi came up.

She turned at the door.

"That poor little Mrs. Jordan, Lloyd," she said. "That visit—you remember?—was not more indiscreet than mine to-night. Fancy asking a jury to believe that you took me to your flat because we couldn't find our way to the Underground!"

She left him with the memory of her mocking eyes; so that he walked homeward very slowly, very thoughtfully.

The tobacconist was putting up his shutters as he passed.

"I'm glad the fog's lifting, Sir," he said. "That lady was properly lost."

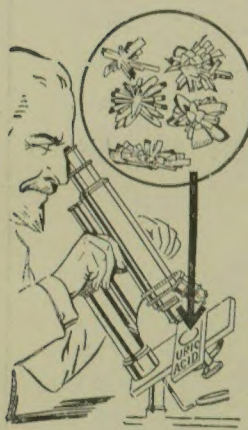
"Yes, she was. It was a dreadful hour or so!"

"She had great difficulty in finding her way 'ere at all, Sir," the experienced tobacconist continued. "Seemed very relieved when I told her that this *was* Toynbee Street, and that the Mansions were not more than a hundred yards away."

[THE END.]

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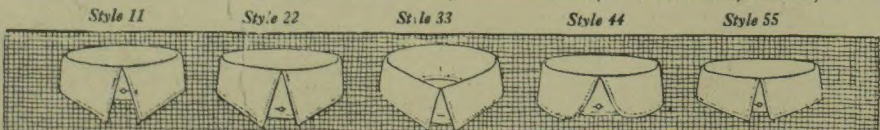
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